CROWNED IN VERSE:
A CHRISTIC EPIC
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FOREWORD

Dear Reader,

In the grand tapestry of human expression, there are threads that weave through the ages, connecting hearts across time and space. Among these threads, poetry stands as a luminous strand, capable of capturing the ineffable, transcending the temporal, and breathing life into the sacred echoes of our shared human experience. In "CROWNED IN VERSE: A CHRISTIC EPIC," I not only wielded the pen but summoned the divine muse to illuminate the life of Jesus Christ in an epic narrative poem.

As I tread through the verses that dance upon these pages, I am reminded of Dante, the poet who dared to traverse the realms of the afterlife, giving vivid expression to the cosmic drama of the human soul. In similar vein, I embarked upon a sacred odyssey, painting the life of Jesus in hues of poetic brilliance. This is not a mere retelling; it is an invocation, a hymn, and a resplendent tapestry that unfurls the majesty of the divine within the ordinary.

The title itself, "CROWNED IN VERSE," suggests a coronation of language, an anointing of syllables that render the story not just told but exalted. It is a poetic retelling that elevates the Gospel to a lyrical plane, where each word is a note, and each verse, a celestial melody. I did not merely write; I wove a sacred symphony where the divine and the literary converge in harmonious splendor.

As we embark on this journey through the verses, it becomes apparent my role is not merely a chronicler; but a minstrel, a bard with a celestial lyre. I let these words cascade like rivulets of grace, carving pathways through the narrative that lead us to the heart of the Christic saga. This is a narrative that transcends dogma and doctrine, inviting readers to witness the life of Jesus with fresh eyes, to feel the pulse of divinity in the ebb and flow of human existence.

In this epic, the reader is transported to the dusty streets of Bethlehem, where the manger becomes a sacred font of possibility. We tread alongside the footprints of Jesus, his parables unfolding like petals, revealing the timeless wisdom within. Each verse is a step, and with each step, the reader is drawn closer to the ineffable mystery that is Christ.

This artistry is not confined to the celestial; it extends to the human. The characters in this epic are not relics of a bygone era but living, breathing souls. The Samaritan woman at the well becomes a vessel of profound dialogue, and the disciples are not mere witnesses but participants in a cosmic drama. The narrative unfolds with an intimate grandeur, making us privy to the subtle nuances of the human experience entwined with the divine.

As we traverse the landscapes of Galilee and the hallowed grounds of Jerusalem, let my verses act as a compass, guiding us through the spiritual terrain. The healing at the pool, the miraculous catch of fish, the encounters with Pharisees — each episode unfolds like a sacred scroll, and with each revelation, we glimpse the manifold facets of the Christic prism.

Yet, it is in the Passion that these poems become a chisel, carving the crucifixion into the very sinews of language. The verses bleed with a redemptive cadence, and in the silence between each line, we hear the echoes of Golgotha. It is here, at the crossroads of mortality and divinity, that the true power of "CROWNED IN VERSE" emerges — in the crucible of suffering and sacrifice, where the Christic epic finds its apotheosis.

And then, the ascension — a moment rendered with ethereal grace. Bethany becomes a threshold between earth and heaven, and as Jesus ascends, the verses become wings that carry us beyond the confines of the terrestrial. The final benediction resounds, and the reader is left in awe, standing at the nexus of the human and the divine.

In "CROWNED IN VERSE," I have not merely written a book; but crafted a sacred reliquary, a testament to the enduring power of poetry to elevate, transform, and transfigure. This is an epic that invites readers to embark on a pilgrimage through the verses, to commune with the sacred, and to witness the eternal rebirth of the Christic narrative.

May these verses be a sacred balm, a resounding hymn, and a timeless testament to the boundless power of the Christic story, crowned in the splendor of poetic expression.

-Jeff Callaway
November 12, 2023

THE WORD BECAME FLESH

In the beginning, the Word did dwell,
With God, in divine realms, the story to tell.
Christ, in the genesis, shared God's embrace,
Fashioning creation, weaving time and space.

Through him, life's tapestry unfolded,
A radiant light, in darkness, beheld.
Yet the world, in its blindness, failed to see,
The Word incarnate, the source of all glee.

Sent from God, a herald named John,
A witness to the light, a truth to dawn.
Not the light himself, but a voice in the night,
Announcing the coming of grace and of light.

The true light approached, a gift to all,
Into the world, the divine did fall.
Yet unrecognized, by its own creation,
A cosmic irony, a divine frustration.

To those who believed, a promise divine,
Children of God, in the light they shine.
Born not of bloodline, nor earthly decree,
But born of God, in a mystery.

The Word took flesh, in humble guise,
Dwelling among us, a heavenly prize.
In his glory revealed, the Father's own Son,
Full of grace and truth, a salvation begun.

John, the witness, cried out loud,
"He who follows surpasses the crowd.

Out of his fullness, grace cascades down,
Replacing grace, in a heavenly crown.

Through Moses, the law, a guiding rod,
Yet grace and truth through Christ bestowed.
No mortal eye has glimpsed God's throne,
But the Son, in the Father's bosom known."

In this cosmic tale, of Word and flesh,
Grace upon grace, in a divine mesh.
The Word, the light, in human frame,
Jesus Christ, forever the same.

THE GENEOLOGY OF JESUS

In the tapestry of time, a lineage unfolds,
A genealogy of grace, in history it molds.
Jesus, Messiah, David's royal son,
Son of Abraham, the tale's begun.

Abraham, father of Isaac, firm and true,
Isaac begets Jacob, a patriarch in view.
Judah, in the line, his brothers by his side,
Generations intertwine, a divine guide.

From Perez and Zerah, Tamar's embrace,
Hezron emerges, a link in the grace.
Ram to Amminadab, Nahshon takes his place,
A lineage etched, each name with grace.

Salmon to Boaz, Rahab's legacy,
Obed follows, Ruth's progeny.
Jesse, in the line, a regal stance,

King David born, a kingly dance.

David begets Solomon, a wise heir,
Through Bathsheba's sorrow, a tale to bear.
Generations unfold, a lineage profound,
Rehoboam, Abijah, in time unbound.

Jehoshaphat, Jehoram, names unfold,
Uzziah, Jotham, in the tale they're told.
Ahaz to Hezekiah, the story persists,
Manasseh, Amon, in the lineage twists.

Josiah, a monarch, Jeconiah in line,
Brothers in exile, in Babylon's confine.
After the exile, a new chapter unfolds,
Shealtiel to Zerubbabel, the story holds.

Abihud to Eliakim, Azor takes his place,
Generations pass with a measured grace.
Zadok, Akim, the names persist,
Elihud to Eleazar, in the lineage list.

Matthan to Jacob, a journey's trace,
Joseph, the husband, in the sacred space.
Mary, the mother, in divine embrace,
Jesus, the Messiah, in this lineage base.

Generations fourteen, from Abraham's prime,
To David's reign, through the sands of time.
Fourteen more, from David's throne,
To Babylon's exile, where sorrows are sown.

Fourteen again, from exile's yoke,
To the Messiah's dawn, a promise spoke.
A lineage rich, with grace and might,

In the tapestry of time, a genealogy's light.

THE BIRTH OF JOHN THE BAPTIST FORETOLD

In days of Herod's reign, in Judea's land,
A priest named Zechariah, by God's command.
Of Abijah's line, with Elizabeth his wife,
Blameless in God's sight, yet childless in life.

In the temple's sacred space, duty assigned,
Zechariah, priestly lot, by God's design.
Before the altar stood an angel bright,
At the hour of incense, a celestial light.

Fear gripped Zechariah, the sight so grand,
But the angel spoke, "Fear not, in this land,
Your prayers are answered, a son you'll see,
A joy to you, and John his name shall be.

Great in the Lord's eyes, from birth set apart,
No wine or strong drink, a consecrated heart.
Filled with the Spirit, from the womb he'll be,
To turn hearts to God, and set captives free.

In Elijah's spirit, he'll blaze the trail,
Prepare the people, for the Lord prevail."
Zechariah doubted, in disbelief,
"I am Gabriel, from God, this message relieve.

You'll be mute till the day my words find truth,
No speech till fulfillment, of this heavenly sleuth."
Outside, the people, in wonder and dread,
As Zechariah gestured, his words left unsaid.

Service complete, to his home he withdrew,
Elizabeth, with child, in awe she knew.

"For me, the Lord's favor," she joyously cried,
Disgrace among people, by God set aside.

THE BIRTH OF JESUS FORETOLD

In Elizabeth's sixth month, a tale unfolds,
In Nazareth, where prophecy molds.
A virgin named Mary, Joseph her betrothed,
A descendant of David, their fate enclosed.

Gabriel descended, with celestial grace,
"Greetings, favored one, in this holy space.
The Lord is with you, fear not, Mary fair,"
Troubled, she pondered, what words rare.

"Do not be afraid, for God's favor you've won,
Conceive and bear a son, call him Jesus, the Son.
Great and Most High, David's throne he'll hold,
Over Jacob's kin, his reign uncontrolled.

A kingdom eternal, without an end,
To Mary, this message the angel did send.
"How can this be?" the virgin inquired,
A question with innocence, her heart inspired.

"The Holy Spirit upon you will descend,
Most High's power, your life will attend.
The holy one born, the Son of God's name,
Elizabeth, too, part of this divine claim.

In her old age, a child will she bear,
Nothing's impossible, God's words declare."
"I am the Lord's servant," Mary replied,
May your word be fulfilled, in me confide.

The angel left, with wings to the heavens flown,
Leaving Mary in solitude, a sacred promise known.
In her womb, the seed of divine grace sown,
A pledge of destiny, in silent awe, she'd own.

MARY VISITS ELIZABETH

In that sacred hour, Mary, with purpose clear,
To the hill country of Judea, did hastily veer.
Zechariah's dwelling, she did draw near,
And Elizabeth, her kinswoman dear.

As Mary's voice met Elizabeth's ear,
A wondrous occurrence did swiftly appear.
Within Elizabeth's womb, joy sincere,
Her unborn babe leaped, the Holy Spirit near.

With voice resounding, Elizabeth cheered,
"Blessed among women, in joy you're ensphered!
Why, favored am I, that my Lord's mother appeared,
Bearing a child, in your womb, revered.

At the sound of your greeting, sweet and revered,
My babe leaped for joy, the divine message cleared.
Blessed is she who believed, as the Lord steered,
His promises fulfilled, in her heart, revered."

MARY'S SONG

"My soul exalts the Lord," Mary's voice did sing,
In God, her Savior, joy and praises ring.
Mindful of his servant in humble state,

Blessed by all generations, her fate.

The Mighty One, in deeds both grand and grand,
Great things for Mary, by His holy hand.
Mercy bestowed upon the reverent heart,
From generation to generation, a divine art.

Mighty deeds performed, His arm displayed,
The proud scattered, their inmost thoughts swayed.
Rulers brought down from their lofty throne,
The humble lifted, their worth widely known.

The hungry filled with goodness untold,
The rich sent away, their treasures sold.
His servant Israel, He did uphold,
Mercy to Abraham's descendants, stories to be told.

For about three months, Mary did reside,
With Elizabeth, in joy, side by side.
Then homeward bound, her destiny her guide,
A promise kept, in God's plan, she'd confide.

THE BIRTH OF JOHN THE BAPTIST

The time arrived, Elizabeth's labor near,
In joyous mercy, a son did appear.
Neighbors and kin, with joyous acclaim,
Shared in the mercy, linked to God's name.

On the eighth day, the ritual unfurls,
Circumcision's rite, naming the boy whirls.
Zechariah, they said, in tradition's grip,
Yet Elizabeth's voice, "John," let slip.

Astonishment echoed, for John, a new name,
No kinsman bore it, their faces aflame.
Signs to the father, Zechariah's choice,
On a tablet, "John," he voiced.

His mouth was freed, his tongue set aglow,
Praising God's might, the words did flow.
Awe gripped the neighbors, in Judea's hills,
Word spread wide, of God's wondrous will.

"What shall this child become?" the people inquired,
For the Lord's hand, upon him, inspired.
In the hill country's embrace, a tale to unfold,
His name, John, by divine decree, foretold.

ZECHARIAH'S SONG

In the sacred temple's hallowed space,
Zechariah, filled with the Spirit's grace.
His voice, a prophet's, raised on high,
A song that echoed through the sky.

"Praise be to the Lord, God of Israel's might,
Who comes to redeem in merciful light.
A horn of salvation in David's kin,
Prophets of old foretold herein.

Salvation from foes, from hatred's hand,
Mercy to ancestors in God's command.
To Abraham's seed, an oath declared,
Rescued from enemies, no longer ensnared.

Serve in holiness, free from fear,
In righteousness, walk, the Lord is near.

And you, my child, a prophet to be,
Prepare the way, make all hearts see.

Knowledge of salvation, sins forgiven,
Tender mercy from the God of heaven.
The rising sun with its radiant gleam,
Shines on those in darkness, a heavenly dream.

To guide our feet in the path of peace,
As the child grows, spirit won't cease.
Strong in the wilderness, his dwelling true,
Until he appears, revealed to Israel's view."

JOSEPH ACCEPTS JESUS AS HIS SON

In the tapestry of time, where destinies align,
A tale unfolds, of a love divine.
Mary, pledged to Joseph, in betrothal's dance,
But a secret stirred, a mystic chance.

Before they united, as man and wife,
A mystery unfolded, shifting the tide.
Mary, with child, a celestial flame,
Pregnant through the Spirit, a sacred claim.

Joseph, just and bound by the law,
Faced a choice, a burden to draw.
Not to expose her to public shame,
Quietly divorce and spare her the blame.

In the quiet of night, a dream took flight,
An angel descended, in celestial light.
"Joseph, son of David," the herald spoke,
Fear not this union, let no doubt evoke.

Take Mary as your wife, the angel declared,
For in her womb, a promise bared.
Conceived by the Spirit, a child of grace,
Jesus, a name to embrace.

A son to be born, a Savior foretold,
To redeem the lost, a tale to unfold.
Immanuel, they shall call him by,
God with us, the prophecy sighs.

Joseph, from slumber, awoke with might,
Obeyed the angel's celestial rite.
Took Mary as his wife, in honor's guise,
In the sacred bond, where love lies.

Yet, their union sealed not in passion's fire,
Until the birth of the promised sire.
Mary bore a son, the name they chose,
Jesus, the Savior, in the manger's repose.

THE BIRTH OF JESUS

In the days of Caesar's stern decree,
A census declared, affecting all, as we see.
From Nazareth's abode, Joseph set forth,
To Bethlehem's town, of David's great worth.

With Mary, his pledged, with child so divine,
No room in the inns, no place to recline.
In a manger, a crib, the baby laid low,
Wrapped in cloths, amid a heavenly glow.

Shepherds in fields, their watchkeeping tale,

Guarding their flocks, the night's silence assail.
An angel appeared, a vision so bright,
Glory shone around, dispelling the night.

"Fear not," spoke the herald with joyous decree,
A Savior is born, the Messiah, to be.
In David's own town, the prophecy unfolds,
A sign for the shepherds, a story retold.

A heavenly host, a chorus so grand,
"Praise be to God!" echoed through the land.
Peace on the earth, favor bestowed,
The shepherds were witnesses, their hearts overflowed.

With haste, they departed to Bethlehem's gate,
Found Mary and Joseph, at the child's tender state.
Spread the word, the tale of this heavenly birth,
Awestruck were all who heard of its worth.

Mary, in silence, treasured the sight,
Pondered these moments, profound in the night.
The shepherds, returning with praises untold,
Glorifying God for the story foretold.

On the eighth day, as the law would demand,
Circumcision's ritual, the child to withstand.
Named Jesus, as the angel had foretold,
Before conception, a name to behold.

THE MAGI VISIT THE MESSIAH

In Bethlehem's cradle, 'neath Judea's moon,
A tale unfolds, a celestial boon.

Jesus, born king, in Herod's realm,
A star arose, the Magi's helm.

From the East they came, a mystic throng,
Guided by the star, a celestial song.
"Where is the King?" they questioned the air,
"We saw his star, a truth to declare."

Herod, the king, disturbed in his throne,
All Jerusalem's heart in tumult known.
Chief priests and scribes, in counsel met,
To Bethlehem's prophecy, their minds set.

Bethlehem, in Judah, a prophecy old,
A ruler from its soil, a tale foretold.
Called by Herod, the Magi spoke low,
Revealing the star's timely glow.

Secretly, Herod sought their plan,
The exact time when the star began.
"Go to Bethlehem," to the Magi, he said,
"Find the child, then to me be led."

Onward they journeyed, the star their guide,
A celestial beacon, in the night wide.
Overjoyed, they followed its light,
To the child's abode, a sacred sight.

A house in Bethlehem, the star stood still,
Guiding them to the child with a holy will.
Mary, with Jesus, in the humble space,
The Magi bowed, in reverent grace.

Treasures unfolded, gifts they bestowed,
Gold, frankincense, and myrrh bestowed.
In worship, they knelt, a sacred vow,

To the infant king, they humbly bow.

In dreams, a warning to their sleep came,
"Return not to Herod," in whispered flame.
Another route they took, homeward bound,
The Magi departed; their mission crowned.

JESUS PRESENTED IN THE TEMPLE

In the sacred halls of the temple so grand,
Joseph and Mary, fulfilling the command.
Purification rites, by Moses' law told,
To Jerusalem's gates, with the child to unfold.

The firstborn male, consecrated, set apart,
A sacrifice offered, a gift from the heart.
Two doves or pigeons, as the law decreed,
In the temple's embrace, their actions agreed.

Simeon, just and devout in his days,
Longing for Israel's comforting rays.
By the Holy Spirit, a promise was sealed,
To witness the Messiah, his fate revealed.

Led by the Spirit, the temple he sought,
As parents, their infant, to the Lord brought.
In his aged arms, the child he did hold,
Praising God's name, a tale to be told.

"Sovereign Lord," Simeon declared,
In peace, his servant could now be spared.
For his eyes witnessed salvation's birth,
A light for Gentiles, a joy for the earth.

To Israel's glory, the child was revealed,
The thoughts of many hearts, unconcealed.
Destined to alter the fate of the land,
A sign that some would not understand.

To Mary, a prophecy, words so true,
A sword would pierce her soul through and through.
Falling and rising, the child would decree,
A revelation to hearts, for all to see.

Anna, a prophetess, aged and devout,
In the temple's courts, her faith devout.
Witness to the moment, she thanked the divine,
Spreading the tale of redemption's design.

With the Law fulfilled, their duties complete,
To Nazareth's town, they retreated.
The child, in wisdom and grace, would grow,
A divine presence, destined to show.

THE ESCAPE TO EGYPT

In shadows cast by Bethlehem's tower,
A tale of flight, an escape's hour.
An angel descended, in dreams profound,
To Joseph, in silence, the message resound.

"Get up," the celestial herald cried,
"Take the child, with Mary by your side.
Escape to Egypt, swift and keen,
For Herod seeks the babe, his heart is mean."

In the depth of night, with stars as their guide,
Joseph rose, in destiny's stride.

The child and his mother, in secret's flight,
Fled to Egypt, under the silent night.

In Egypt's embrace, they found reprieve,
A haven sought, a sanctuary weave.
There they stayed until Herod's breath ceased,
The prophecy fulfilled, the sacred feast.

Out of Egypt, a voice had foretold,
A prophet's vision, in days of old.
The Lord had spoken through ancient lore,
His son called from Egypt's distant shore.

Yet, in Bethlehem, a darker scene,
Herod, deceived, his wrath was keen.
A plot unraveled, his fury unleashed,
A decree issued, the innocent to be ceased.

All boys two and under, in Bethlehem's space,
Ordered to perish, a tyrant's embrace.
Fulfilling Jeremiah's mournful decree,
A voice heard in Ramah, a tragic plea.

"Weeping and great mourning," the prophet foretold,
Rachel's tears in the tale unfold.
Her children gone, a grief profound,
In Bethlehem's streets, no laughter found.

A voice echoes in the sorrowful night,
A prophecy fulfilled in Herod's spite.
In Ramah's wail, a dirge takes flight,
For the innocent children, lost in the blight.

THE RETURN TO NAZARETH

As shadows waned and Egypt's sands sighed,
An angel whispered, in dreams Joseph confide.
"Arise," he spoke, "take the child and wife,
Return to Israel, embrace your life.

For Herod's breath no longer heaves,
The threat is gone, the danger leaves.
To the land of Israel, your journey trace,
A sanctuary found, a sacred space."

In the quiet dawn, he rose with might,
Took the child and Mary, in morning's light.
To Israel's land, their steps were led,
Yet fear crept in as rumors spread.

Archelaus, a ruler in Herod's stead,
In Judea's throne, where shadows tread.
In a dream, a warning, a celestial plea,
To Galilee's haven, they chose to flee.

A town named Nazareth, in quiet repose,
A refuge sought, where safety grows.
There they dwelled, in shadows vast,
Fulfilling the prophecy, in the die they cast.

Through prophets' words, the tale was spun,
A Nazarene called; the journey done.
In Nazareth's embrace, a haven true,
Joseph, Mary, and the child anew.

THE BOY JESUS AT THE TEMPLE

In Jerusalem's shadow, the Passover's call,
A yearly pilgrimage, the customs enthrall.
Jesus, twelve years, in the festival's embrace,
With parents, a journey, a sacred place.

The Passover's echoes, in their hearts reside,
Homeward-bound footsteps, with Him at their side.
But in the twilight's hush, a truth untold,
The boy Jesus lingered, mysteries unfold.

Unaware, the parents, a day's journey complete,
Seeking Him in kinship, in friendships sweet.
Yet, a lone figure in the temple's grandeur,
Three days passed, a divine interlude.

Amidst the scholars, the boy held his own,
Questions profound, wisdom brightly shone.
Amazement echoed in the temple's hall,
A divine presence, enchanting all.

His parents, astonished, sought answers in fear,
"Why, my son, have you caused us such tear?"
In the temple's embrace, the boy did confide,
"Did you not know, in my Father's house, I reside?"

Perplexed were they, by the words unknown,
A divine purpose in a child's wisdom sown.
To Nazareth's abode, they made their way,
In obedience, Jesus with them did stay.

In wisdom, in stature, God's favor untold,
A divine journey, a story to be told.

In the heart of his mother, these moments she'd store,
As Jesus, the boy, in wisdom, did soar.

JOHN THE BAPTIST PREPARES THE WAY

In Judea's wilderness, where silence spoke,
John the Baptist, a voice awoke.
"Repent!" he cried, the kingdom near,
Prepare the way, let paths be clear.

The prophet Isaiah's words took flight,
A voice proclaiming in the desert's might.
"Make straight the paths," the message sent,
For the Lord's arrival, imminent.

Cloaked in camel's hair, a prophet's guise,
A leather belt, where devotion lies.
Locusts and honey, his humble fare,
In the wilderness, a sacred air.

From Jerusalem, Judea's bound,
And the Jordan's realm, a throng unbound.
Confessing sins, the penitent thrived,
In baptism's waters, their souls revived.

Yet, when Pharisees and Sadducees drew near,
John's voice rang out, a warning clear.
"Brood of vipers!" his accusation hurled,
Flee from wrath, the impending world.

"Produce fruit," he cried, in repentance's name,
Not in Abraham's lineage, find your claim.
From stones, God can raise a chosen seed,
The ax poised, a reckoning deed.

At the root of trees, the ax would fall,
Every barren tree, to the flames would call.
A baptism of water, John conferred,
But one more mighty, by God preferred.

A baptism not of water's embrace,
But in the Holy Spirit and fire's grace.
The winnowing fork in the Master's hand,
Gathering wheat, burning chaff on the land.

A threshing floor, a divine chore,
The barn for wheat, the chaff, no more.
In unquenchable fire, the judgment dire,
A proclamation echoed, a holy pyre.

THE BAPTISM OF JESUS

From Galilee’s embrace to Jordan's shore,
Jesus came, a presence to implore.
To John, the Baptist, he did draw near,
Seeking baptism, a sacred veneer.

John, in awe, tried to dissuade,
"I need your baptism," he conveyed.
But Jesus spoke with purpose clear,
To fulfill all righteousness, he drew near.

In the Jordan's stream, he chose to wade,
Baptized by John, in the water's shade.
As he rose, the heavens unveiled,
A dove descended; the Spirit hailed.

A voice echoed from realms above,

"This is my Son, whom I love.
With him, I am well pleased,"
In divine affirmation, the bond appeased.

JOHN THE BAPTIST TESTIFIES ABOUT JESUS

Upon the morrow, John beheld a sight,
Jesus approached, radiant with light.
"The Lamb of God," his fervent cry,
Who lifts the world's sin, bidding it goodbye.

"He surpasses me," John did proclaim,
Preceding me, yet higher in fame.
Though unknown to me, his presence near,
I baptize with water, the path made clear.

Witnessing the Spirit, a dove descending,
Upon Jesus, divinity blending.
"I saw it descend," John testified strong,
The Chosen of God, to whom I belong.

Sent by the One who commands the way,
To baptize with Spirit, His will convey.
I bear witness to His divine call,
The Chosen of God, before whom I fall.

JESUS IS TESTED IN THE WILDERNESS

Led by the Spirit to the wilderness vast,
Jesus faced a trial, a tempest to be cast.
Forty days and nights, in fasting's plight,
Hungry and weakened, yet steadfast in the night.

The tempter appeared, his cunning at play,
“If the Son of God, these stones obey.
Command them to be bread, your hunger sate,”
But Jesus resisted, sealed by a divine fate.

His answer rang out, a truth profound,
“Man lives not by bread but words renowned,
From God's very mouth, the sustenance divine,
In His sacred utterance, my soul shall twine.”

To the holy city, the devil led the way,
To the temple's pinnacle, a grand display.
“If the Son of God,” the tempter implored,
“Cast yourself down, by angels adored.”

But Jesus, resolute, spoke words of old,
“Do not test the Lord,” the Scriptures foretold.
A stance unwavering, in trust divine,
For God's providence, His plan to entwine.

Once more, the devil sought a mountain's height,
All kingdoms displayed, a tempting sight.
“All these, I'll give,” the devil pled,
“If you but bow and worship,” he said.

Jesus, with fervor, rejected the plea,
“Away, Satan! Worship the Lord, only He.
For it is written, a truth profound,
Serve the Almighty, on holy ground.”

The devil departed, his temptations done,
Angels attended; the victory won.
In the wilderness, a triumphant stand,
Jesus, upheld by the divine hand.

JESUS BEGINS TO PREACH

When news arrived of John, imprisoned and confined,
Jesus, to Galilee, withdrew his mind.
From Nazareth to Capernaum's embrace,
By the lake, Zebulun and Naphtali's grace.

Fulfilling prophecy, Isaiah's word foretold,
In Zebulun's land, a tale to unfold.
"Land of Naphtali, by the Way of the Sea,
Galilee of the Gentiles, where light shall be."

In shadows profound, a great light would gleam,
A dawn in the land of death's shadowy dream.
From that time forth, a proclamation near,
Jesus preached, "Repent, for the kingdom is here."

JESUS CALLS HIS FIRST DISCIPLES

Upon the shores of Galilee's expanse,
Where waves and whispers meet in a sacred dance,
Walked Jesus, the Son, with purpose profound,
Seeking souls lost, in redemption unbound.

Beside the sea, where waters unfold,
Two brothers, Simon and Andrew, bold.
Their nets entwined in the lake's embrace,
Fishermen's toil, a familiar chase.

To them, the Savior spoke, His voice serene,
"Come, follow me, for a higher scene.
I'll make you fishers of souls, not of fish,
A noble pursuit, a divine wish."

In an instant, they cast their nets away,
A pledge to follow, a new light of day.
Leaving behind the nets, the familiar shore,
They walked with the Master, forevermore.

Further on, by the waterside,
More disciples awaited the call, the guide.
James and John, in a boat with their sire,
Mending their nets by the flickering fire.

Jesus called them, a summons divine,
"Leave your boat, and your father's line.
Follow me into realms unknown,
In the steps of faith, let your path be sown."

In a heartbeat, they left it all behind,
Father, boat, and the life they'd find.
No hesitation, no backward glance,
A journey begun in the Savior's trance.

Two sets of brothers, by the water's edge,
Answered the call, left their fishing pledge.
A fellowship formed in that coastal night,
As disciples followed the guiding light.

JESUS CALLS PHILLIP AND NATHANAEL

The morrow's light upon Galilee shone,
Jesus, His purpose, to Philip made known.
"Follow me," He spoke, a call profound,
Philip, stirred by grace, with purpose bound.

From Bethsaida's town, where waters meet,

Philip sought Nathanael, words to greet.
"We've found the One by Moses' pen,
Prophets foretold, Jesus of Nazareth, son of men."

"Nazareth, can goodness there reside?"
Nathanael queried, doubt implied.
"Come and see," Philip urged his friend,
A truth profound, on faith depend.

As Nathanael nears, Jesus speaks clear,
"An Israelite true, no guile to fear."
Surprised, Nathanael, "How can it be?"
Jesus replied, "Under the fig tree, I saw thee."

Rabbi, Son of God, King of Israel named,
Nathanael's proclamation, faith untamed.
Jesus foresaw, beneath the fig tree's shade,
A revelation, divine, the skeptic swayed.

"Believe for this? A glimpse in part?
Greater things await, a divine restart.
Heaven shall open, angels' descent,
On the Son of Man, a vision sent."

THE CALLING OF MATTHEW

"As Jesus walked the path divine,
A tax collector, Matthew, in the tax booth did recline.
'Follow me,' the Savior spoke,
Matthew rose, the old life broke.

At Matthew's table, Jesus dines,
With tax collectors and sinners, in those lines.
The Pharisees question, their voices keen,
'Why with sinners and not the serene?'

Jesus answers, with wisdom vast,
'The sick need a doctor, not the steadfast.'
'Go, learn mercy, sacrifice divine,'
For the righteous, not the sinners, is the call benign."

JESUS APPOINTS THE TWELVE

Upon a mountaintop, in solemn grace,
Jesus called his chosen, in that sacred place.
"Come forth to me," his voice did sound,
And those he willed, with purpose, they were bound.

Twelve, the chosen, in the Master's hand,
Apostles appointed, a destined band.
To be with him, their honored call,
Sent to preach, on them a solemn thrall.

With authority endowed, demons to dispel,
Against the darkness, a mission to quell.
Simon, called Peter, a rock so named,
In the celestial plan, forever famed.

James and John, brothers of the stormy sound,
Boanerges, the sons of thunder, renowned.
Andrew, Philip, Bartholomew, and the rest,
Apostles named, their destiny blessed.

Matthew, Thomas, James the lesser known,
Thaddaeus, Simon the Zealot, seeds were sown.
Judas Iscariot, among the twelve,
A shadow cast, destiny to delve.

In the echelons of destiny's chart,

The twelve were chosen, a sacred heart.
Yet, in the circle, a betrayer's fate,
Judas, whose actions sealed a darker gate.

JESUS TURNS WATER INTO WINE

Upon the third dawn, in Cana's town,
A wedding's joy, where joy was known.
Mary, mother, in attendance graced,
With Jesus and disciples placed.

Wine's well ran dry, a concern unveiled,
To Mary, the lack, her words entailed.
"They've no more wine," to her son she spoke,
A plea in silence, a need bespoke.

"Woman," Jesus replied, with measured mien,
"Why involve me? My hour's not seen."
Yet, Mary turned to the servants near,
With firm resolve, dispelling fear.

Six stone jars, for cleansing rites designed,
With water filled, as Christ assigned.
"Draw some out," the servants obeyed,
To the banquet master, the gift displayed.

Tasting the water turned into wine,
The master puzzled, a truth divine.
Unaware of the source, he inquired,
To the bridegroom, his praise transpired.

"Choice wine first, then a lesser kind,
But you've kept the best," the master opined.
In Cana's feat, a sign unfurled,

Revealing Christ, His glory swirled.

The disciples, witnesses to this display,
In Cana's grace, belief held sway.
To Capernaum's shore, the journey's course,
With kin and disciples, in joyful force.

JESUS HEALS THE SICK

In Galilee's expanse, where shadows wane,
Jesus walked, a healer, no ailment in vain.
In synagogues, His teachings would resound,
A voice of hope, where healing was found.

The good news of the kingdom, a radiant flame,
He proclaimed with vigor, a Savior to acclaim.
Diseases and sickness, in His presence fled,
A touch, a word, and the afflicted were led.

News traversed Syria, like the wind's swift flight,
People brought the ill, in hope's tender light.
Various maladies, pain that cut deep,
Demon-possessed souls, in His presence, would weep.

Seizures ceased, the paralyzed found release,
A healer's touch, a balm of divine peace.
Large crowds gathered from regions wide,
Galilee, Decapolis, and Jordan's tide.

In Jerusalem, Judea, and beyond,
A multitude followed; a chorus fond.
The healer walked, His presence revered,
A symphony of miracles, the sick endeared.

JESUS FORGIVES AND HEALS A PARALYZED MAN

In Capernaum's heart, where tales unfold,
Jesus, in his home, his teachings extolled.
The masses gathered, a fervent tide,
No space to enter, not even outside.

Four men arrived, a burden they bore,
A paralyzed soul, weak and sore.
Through the crowded throng, they sought their way,
To the roof they climbed, where an opening lay.

With faith unyielding, they lowered him low,
A mat suspended, a divine tableau.
Jesus beheld their unwavering trust,
To the paralyzed man, He spoke, robust.

"Son, your sins are forgiven," He declared,
A divine decree, in the crowded lair.
Teachers of the law, with thoughts askew,
Questioned His words, blasphemy they drew.

"Why does he claim what only God can do?"
In their hearts, the murmurs grew.
Jesus, discerning their unspoken doubt,
Addressed their musings with words devout.

"Which is simpler, to heal or forgive?"
He challenged their thoughts so they'd perceive.
"The Son of Man holds authority divine,
On earth to pardon, His power does shine."

To the paralyzed, He then decreed,

"Arise, take your mat, be freed indeed."
The man stood tall, his ailment shed,
Amazement spread, words of God widespread.

Through the crowd, in view of all,
He walked away, heeding the call.
A spectacle divine, praise did ensue,
"We've seen wonders; God's grace anew!"

A MAN WITH A WITHERED HAND

Within the synagogue's hallowed hall,
A man with a withered hand, his fate befall.
Eyes upon Jesus, a watchful gaze,
On the Sabbath, would he heal, the crowd amaze?

"Come forth," he beckoned, the man drawn near,
In the Sabbath's stillness, a moment clear.
"To do good or harm on this sacred day,
To save a life or let it fray?"

Silent stood the Pharisees, hearts like stone,
Their thoughts concealed, their motives unknown.
Jesus, with anger, scanned their frozen core,
Grieved by their hardness, a sight to deplore.

"Stretch out your hand," he bid the man,
A sacred act, a divine plan.
The withered hand, like morning light,
Restored in glory, a wondrous sight.

Yet, Pharisees, in counsel grim,
With Herodians, plotted shadows dim.
Against the healer, they wove a scheme,

To destroy the light in the Sabbath's beam.

JESUS CLEARS THE TEMPLE COURTS

As Passover neared, Jerusalem's call,
Jesus ascended, to the temple hall.
Cattle lowed, sheep bleated near,
Doves confined, a market's veneer.

Tables lined with coins, the clinking sound,
Commerce in the sacred ground.
Crafting a whip, cords intertwined,
With righteous fury, zeal defined.

Driving out sheep and cattle's graze,
Scattering coins, a fervent blaze.
To dove vendors, a stern decree,
"Father's house, a sanctuary be!"

Disciples beheld, recalled the psalm,
"Zeal consumes, a righteous qualm."
Jews questioned with doubtful ire,
"What sign, what proof, to quench our fire?"

Jesus answered, a cryptic phrase,
"Destroy this temple in fleeting days,
In three, it rises, not made of stone,
My body, the temple, God's truth is known."

Forty-six years, the Jews retort,
Building the temple, a lengthy fort.
Jesus spoke of a temple divine,
His body's resurrection, a sign.

Raised from the dead, disciples, then,
Recalled His words, belief in ken.
In Jerusalem, signs ablaze,
Many believed, in Jesus' name's gaze.

Yet He, in wisdom, withheld embrace,
Knowing mankind's fickle grace.
No need for witness or testimony,
In each heart, His divine acrimony.

JESUS TEACHES NICODEMUS

In shadows deep, where darkness crept,
A Pharisee in secrets kept.
Nicodemus, by night's embrace,
Sought the Teacher's holy grace.

"Rabbi," he spoke, with reverence pure,
"From God, your signs, divinely sure.
For whom but God with power untold,
In miracles, His truth unfold?"

Jesus, in wisdom, began to share,
"Born again, to God repair.
No mortal womb, no earthly birth,
A rebirth of Spirit, a second mirth."

"How?" Nicodemus, in doubt, inquired,
"Old in flesh, can one be inspired?
Reenter the womb, a path unknown?"
Jesus, in Spirit's truth, has shown.

"Born of water, Spirit's decree,
Flesh bears flesh, Spirit sets free.

Marvel not at the words I say,
Born again, a heavenly way."

"The wind," He spoke, "in mystery roves,
You hear its whispers, yet none behooves
To trace its path, its origin, its flight,
Born of the Spirit, a hidden light."

Perplexed, Nicodemus sought to know,
"How can this be? Where does it go?"
"You, a teacher of Israel's lore,
Yet grasp not what I implore?"

Earthly things I strive to impart,
Yet heavenly truths, you're slow to chart.
Witness to what we've seen and known,
Yet your hearts, hardened, like stone.

Moses raised the serpent high,
In the wilderness, 'neath the sky.
So too, the Son of Man must rise,
Bringing eternal life, a heavenly prize.

God's love immense, the world to save,
His Son, a gift, the lost to pave.
Believe in Him, no soul condemned,
Eternal life, on faith depend.

Not to condemn, but to redeem,
The Son of God, in love supreme.
Those who believe, in light they stand,
Yet darkness fears the truth's demand.

For evil shuns the light's embrace,
Deeds exposed, in truth's own grace.
Live by truth, in God's own sight,

Deeds laid bare, in eternal light.

JESUS TALKS WITH A SAMARITAN WOMAN

Through Judean lands, where Pharisees pry,
News reached their ears, of Jesus' supply.
More disciples gained, the crowd amassed,
Baptizing more than John, His fame held fast.

Though hands of disciples touched the stream,
It wasn't Jesus' touch that graced the dream.
To Galilee, He turned His face,
The Pharisees' whispers to outpace.

Samaria's way, His journey's guide,
To Sychar's town, where wells abide.
Jacob's gift, a plot renowned,
A well, where living water's found.

In weariness, by the well He sat,
Noon's sun blazed, a scorching mat.
A Samaritan woman drew near,
Her presence unknown, her past unclear.

"Give me a drink," the Savior pled,
Jew to Samaritan, boundaries spread.
Surprised, she questioned the strange request,
"Why ask of me? You know the jest."

"If you knew God's gift, who seeks a sip,
You'd ask, and living water would equip.
A spring within, eternal, pure,
Quenching thirst forevermore."

Perplexed, she asked, "Where's your vessel true?
This well is deep, what can you do?
Are you greater than Jacob, our kin,
Who drank and gave to all therein?"

"Drink this water, thirst will return,
But mine, a gift you'll ever yearn.
A spring within, eternal and free,
Flowing to life's eternity."

"Give me this water," she pled with might,
To cease her thirst, day and night.
"Call your husband," the Savior said,
A truth to unveil, secrets widespread.

"No husband," she answered with guarded breath,
"Five husbands past, and one in death.
You're a prophet," she discerned,
As the conversation took a turn.

"On this mountain or Jerusalem's space,
Where should one seek God's holy grace?"
A truth unfolded, Jesus declared,
"A time approaches, a worship rare."

"True worshipers, Spirit-bound,
In truth and spirit, faith unbound.
Not on this mount or in Jerusalem's fold,
The Father's sought by hearts untold."

"Samaritans worship what's unknown,
While Jews find truth in God alone.
But a time has come, and now draws near,
True worshipers in spirit, God revere."

"God is spirit," the Savior explained,

In spirit and truth, worship ordained.
A Messiah awaited, the woman professed,
"When he comes, all will be addressed."

"I who speak to you," the Savior claimed,
"The awaited One," in His name proclaimed.
Messiah, Christ, God's only Son,
Divine lineage, the victory won.

THE DISCIPLES REJOIN JESUS

The disciples returned with wonderous eyes,
Finding Jesus in talk, a strange surprise.
No queries uttered, silently they stand,
As He spoke with a woman in Samarian land.

Leaving her jar, she ran with delight,
To the town she went, a beacon in the night.
"Come, see a man who knows all I've done,
Could he be Messiah, God's chosen one?"

From the town, a gathering crowd,
Moved by her words, curious and loud.
To Jesus, they came, with hope ablaze,
Seeking the truth in the sun's dying gaze.

"Rabbi, eat," the disciples implore,
Yet Jesus speaks of a food they ignore.
"My food is to do the will divine,
To finish the work, the Father's design.

Look at the fields, ready for the reaper,
Harvest of souls, a joyous keeper.
One sows, another reaps in this grand plan,

Reaping the benefits, the labor of man."

MANY SAMARITANS BELIEVE

From that Samaritan town, a belief did swell,
In him, the Savior, of whom the woman did tell.
He who unveiled secrets buried deep,
The Samaritans gathered, their faith to reap.

To Jesus, they came, with a plea sincere,
"Stay with us, O Teacher, linger near."
He, in their midst, two days did stay,
Words flowed like rivers, guiding their way.

The woman's testimony, a spark in the night,
Kindled a flame, a newfound light.
No more relying on her words alone,
They heard him speak, the Savior known.

"We believe, not just by what you share,
For ourselves, we've heard, felt the truth in the air.
This man, the Savior, the world's true Light,
In our hearts, his presence burns bright."

JESUS HEALS AN OFFICIAL'S SON

From Galilee, Jesus set his course anew,
For in his homeland, honor he knew was few.
Galileans, having seen wonders unfold,
Welcomed the one, the stories had told.

Cana's town, where water turned to wine,
A royal official, in despair did pine.

His son lay ill, in Capernaum's keep,
A plea for healing, as he knelt to weep.

To Jesus, he went, a desperate cry,
"Begging, O Master, before my son shall die."
Jesus, the healer, the one they sought,
Spoke, "Without wonders, belief is naught."

"Sir, come down, my child's last breath nears,
Before death claims him, wipe away my tears."
"Go," said Jesus, "your son shall live,
Trust my word, the grace I give."

The man departed, faith his guide,
On the journey home, hope as his tide.
Servants met him with joyful report,
His son was well, life's cruel retort.

"When did he mend?" the anxious father sought,
"At yesterday's hour, the fever was fought."
At that moment, belief took hold,
In Jesus' words, a truth foretold.

The second sign in Galilee's land,
A healing touch from the Savior's hand.
The official and his kin, faith retrieved,
In the miracle that they believed.

THE HEALING AT THE POOL

To Jerusalem, where festivals arise,
Jesus walks, where hope within hearts lies.
Bethesda's pool, by Sheep Gate's grace,

A gathering of those in ailment's embrace.

A pool surrounded by colonnades tall,
Where the suffering lay, both the great and the small.
Blind, lame, and paralyzed, a pitiful scene,
Longing for healing, their bodies unclean.

Thirty-eight years, an invalid's plea,
Lies a man, as if chained, in infirmity.
Jesus, compassionate, inquires with care,
"Do you wish to be whole? Is life what you dare?"

"Sir," the invalid, with a hopeless sigh,
"No one helps me when the waters are nigh.
Striving to enter, my efforts in vain,
Others go before me, causing my pain."

"Rise," spoke Jesus, "take your mat, walk free,"
Instantly, the man, from his shackles, is free.
Yet, on this Sabbath, the critics appear,
"The law is transgressed," they jeer.

To the healed, they say, "Carrying's a sin,
On the sacred Sabbath, this act's within.
Who told you to carry?" they sternly demand,
"The one who healed me," the man makes a stand.

A search for Jesus, but lost in the crowd,
The healed man is silent, his voice not allowed.
Later, in the temple, Jesus he meets,
"Sickness departed, your wholeness repeats."

"Sin no more," Jesus cautions with care,
Lest fate befall you, a heavier share.
The man, now cured, to the leaders imparts,
Jesus, the healer, who touched broken hearts.

THE AUTHORITY OF THE SON

In the realm of Sabbaths' solemn light,
Persecution stirred, shadows took flight.
Jesus, the healer, the Sabbath defied,
Jewish leaders, in anger, his actions decried.

"My Father works, His toil unceasing,
And I too labor, my purpose releasing."
An offense grave, in their judgment's sight,
Breaking the Sabbath, claiming divine right.

Not only that, a claim profound,
To God as Father, in echoes resound.
Equality declared, a truth untold,
The leaders, in fury, their anger unfold.

"Son, in submission, follows the trace,
Only mirroring the Father's grace.
Greater wonders await, a cosmic display,
Beyond mortal minds, leading the way.

The dead, the Son grants life anew,
As the Father raises, His power to imbue.
Judgment entrusted, a profound decree,
All honor the Son, as the Father, see.

Eternal life to those who believe,
No judgment for them, death they leave.
A time arrives, the dead shall hear,
The voice of the Son, dispelling fear.

Life in the Father, to the Son bequeathed,

Authority to judge, His power unleashed.
Marvel not, for a grand hour nears,
Graves shall echo with the Son's voice, it appears.

Rising from slumber, both good and ill,
Their deeds defining their destiny's chill.
In solitary judgment, the Son stands,
Seeking not glory for Himself, but God's commands."

TESTIMONIES ABOUT JESUS

In the hall of judgments, truth declared,
Words from Jesus, weighty and bared.
"If self-testimony I lay at your feet,
Deem it false, incomplete.

Another testifier in my favor stands,
His testimony, across the lands,
I know it true, a witness divine,
In harmony, our truths entwine.

To John, you sent, his voice proclaimed,
In his words, the truth unchained.
Yet not in human words alone,
But in divine works, the Father has shown.

The tasks assigned, I faithfully fulfill,
A testament, my purpose to instill.
The Father's voice, a testimony profound,
Yet unheard by you, in disbelief bound.

No form, no voice, His essence concealed,
His word, a stranger in your hearts, unsealed.
In diligent study of Scriptures, you find,

Eternal life, in the lines entwined.

The very Scriptures, my story portray,
Yet to me, you turn away.
Refusing life, the truth you dismiss,
Choosing the dark, the Light you miss.

Glory from mortals, I reject,
In the love of God, your hearts deflect.
In the Father's name, I come in grace,
Yet rejected, you turn your face.

If another comes, his own name he brings,
You'll accept, in the void, your applause sings.
Belief in me, a challenge unseen,
Your hearts hardened, a realm unclean.

Accusations won't before the Father rise,
Moses, your accuser, in whom hope lies.
If Moses' words you truly received,
In my words, you'd find reprieve.

Moses scribed, in scrolls of old,
My story, in prophecies told.
Yet, disbelief in your hearts persists,
How then my words, will they exist?"

SERMON ON THE MOUNT INTRO

Upon a mountainside, where heavens kiss the earth,
Jesus, surrounded by disciples, declared His worth.
The crowds gathered, a multitude vast,
As the Teacher, in solemnity, began to cast.

"Blessed," He uttered, a divine decree,
A proclamation of grace, a sacred key.
The poor in spirit, in their humble quest,
The kingdom of heaven, their eternal rest.

Those who mourn, grief's heavy shroud,
In solace and comfort, they would be endowed.
Meekness, a virtue, their inheritance clear,
The earth, a legacy, they would revere.

Hunger and thirst for righteousness deep,
A promise echoed, a covenant to keep.
Merciful souls, compassion's embrace,
In mercy shown, they find their place.

The pure in heart, a vision divine,
God's face beheld, a sacred sign.
Peacemakers, forging harmony's art,
Children of God, a title to impart.

Persecuted for righteousness, a path divine,
The kingdom of heaven, their final shrine.
Blessed are those, in insult and strife,
Rejoice and be glad, the reward of eternal life.

In the face of persecution, a sacred kin,
For prophets of old, the same had been.
Blessed are you when falsely accused,
Your reward in heaven, divinely infused.

SALT AND LIGHT

Oh, disciples chosen, in the grandeur of birth,

Salt of the earth, destined for worth.
Yet, beware the fate that may befall,
When salt loses its essence, a dismal thrall.

For what use has salt, devoid of its taste,
Cast away, in bitterness embraced?
Trampled underfoot, a fate so dire,
To reclaim its saltiness, a futile desire.

But fear not, disciples, a greater decree,
A light to the world, radiant and free.
Built on a hill, a city aglow,
A beacon of truth, a luminous show.

A lamp is not hidden, nor concealed,
On its stand, its brilliance revealed.
In the house of the world, its glow expands,
A light for all, in radiant strands.

Disciples, let your light shine bright,
Before the eyes of the world's vast night.
Good deeds as sparks, in the darkness sown,
Glorifying the Father, on heaven's throne.

THE FULLFILLMENT OF THE LAW

Fear not, O seekers of truth divine,
For I declare a purpose sublime.
Not to abolish, but to fulfill,
The Law and the Prophets, a covenant still.

Not a jot, not a tittle shall fade away,
Till heaven and earth see their final day.
In the grand tapestry of God's grand plan,

Every command upheld, by the Son of Man.

Let no one diminish, let no one erase,
The wisdom enshrined in the ancient grace.
To set aside, to neglect the decree,
Is to be least in the kingdom to be.

Yet, those who embrace and diligently teach,
The commandments divine, within their reach,
Shall be called great in the kingdom's expanse,
Their righteousness shining, a radiant dance.

A surpassing righteousness, a lofty aim,
Beyond Pharisees' piety, beyond their fame.
For the kingdom of heaven welcomes those,
Whose hearts are aligned with the divine flows.

So, heed this call, O seekers sincere,
A righteousness profound, let it appear.
In the kingdom of heaven, find your place,
Embracing the Law, in God's boundless grace.

MURDER

In ancient words, a decree well-known,
"You shall not murder," the command was sown.
A judgment awaits those who take a life,
A sentence severe in the world of strife.

Yet, I proclaim a truth untold,
Beyond the act, a tale to unfold.
Anger harbored in the depths within,
A shadowed soul, a dormant sin.

Anger, the seed of judgment's sway,
A brother reviled, a sister's dismay.
To the court of the heart, the soul must face,
For angry words, a dangerous embrace.

"Raca!" uttered in disdain,
An answer demanded, a reckoning plain.
And "fool," the perilous cry,
Echoing, danger of the hellish sky.

Before the altar, your gift held high,
Remember the rift, the soul's deep sigh.
Leave your offering, go and amend,
Reconciliation, let it ascend.

Quickly settle with your adversary near,
On the road of life, where judgments peer.
Lest the judge, the officer's chain,
Leads to prison's depth, an unending bane.

Truly I tell you, a stern decree,
Release from prison comes only when free.
Reconcile, redeem, in mercy's embrace,
A journey of peace, a path of grace.

ADULTERY

In the echo of ancient decree,
"You shall not commit adultery," spoke He.
Yet, beyond the act, a truth profound,
Lustful gaze, a sin unbound.

To look upon with desire untamed,
A heart, in secret, subtly inflamed.

Adultery within, the silent strife,
An inner battleground, the hidden life.

A stern warning, a drastic plea,
"If your eye leads to iniquity,
Gouge it out, cast it away,
Save your soul from hell's dismay."

For if the hand, the right, the guide,
Leads astray, in sin abide,
Sever it, cut it from your frame,
Rather maimed than hell's cruel claim.

A tale of sacrifice, a warning bold,
To guard the heart, let righteousness hold.
In the realm within, where thoughts do swell,
A battleground where virtue dwells.

DIVORCE

In the scrolls of old, a law declared,
"A certificate of divorce," thus shared.
But deeper truths, in Christ, unfurl,
A discourse on love, in the wisdom of the world.

"If you divorce, and not for sin,
You make her victim, a tale of din.
Adultery taints, the consequence dire,
A chain of sorrow, fueled by the pyre."

The bond of marriage, sacred, strong,
A covenant vowed, a lifelong song.
Yet, Christ speaks of a dire exception,
A concession rare in this connection.

For when immorality stains the tie,
A grounds for parting, love awry.
But beware, oh, one who takes another's spouse,
In such a union, shadows of an adulterous house.

A glimpse into the fabric of sacred vows,
A teaching profound, as divine light allows.
In matters of the heart, a sacred scroll,
A solemn tale, with lessons for the soul.

OATHS

In days of old, a code declared,
"Do not break oaths," to all it aired.
Fulfill to the Lord, the vows you bind,
A covenant sacred, in the hearts enshrined.

Yet, Christ, in wisdom, the code revised,
"Swear no oaths," the truth apprised.
By heaven, earth, or the city's dome,
Let not your words to oaths succumb.

For Heaven's throne, in majesty grand,
And the earth, His footstool, where we stand,
Jerusalem, the Great King's domain,
In sacred silence, let your truth remain.

Swear not by your head, a fragile guise,
For not one hair escapes Time's unyielding ties.
A simple 'Yes' or 'No,' the vow complete,
Beyond this, the whispers of deceit.

In echoes old, a timeless decree,

In Christ's teaching, a new decree be.
A covenant of words, pure and true,
Let 'Yes' be 'Yes,' let 'No' be 'No.'

EYE FOR AN EYE

In days of yore, a code declared,
"An eye for an eye," the law ensnared.
Retribution, swift and stern,
Justice met with vengeance earned.

Yet, Christ, in wisdom, the code revised,
"Do not resist," the truth advised.
If a slap on the right cheek finds its way,
Turn the other, let peace hold sway.

Should a suitor seek your shirt,
Offer your coat, release the hurt.
Forced a mile? Go an extra span,
Extend your journey, lend a hand.

Give to those who in need implore,
Generosity, an open door.
Borrow not, but freely share,
A compassion that transcends compare.

LOVE FOR ENEMIES

In ancient echoes, whispers old,
"Love your neighbor," tales foretold.
Yet, an addendum, an ageless decree,
"Hate your enemy," shaped destiny.

But Christ, with words like gentle streams,
Swept away divisive, vengeful dreams.
"Love your enemies," the new command,
A divine embrace, across the land.

Pray for those who wield disdain,
A practice that transcends the mundane.
Children of heaven, rise above,
In love and prayer, embody love.

The sun ascends on both fair and foul,
Rain descends with impartial prowl.
Tax collectors, pagans too,
Love embraces a broader view.

For even the wicked, God's love does swell,
In perfection, His children dwell.
Greet beyond your own kin's shore,
A divine love, forevermore.

GIVING TO THE NEEDY

In acts of virtue, let silence reign,
A whispered kindness, a secret gain.
Beware the stage where the hypocrites dance,
With trumpets loud, their own advance.

Give to the needy, but veiled in grace,
No fanfare grand, no boasting trace.
Let not your left hand what the right hand bestows,
In secrecy sown, compassion grows.

For the Father above, in hidden domain,
Watches the heart, untouched by vain.

A reward unseen, in realms above,
For deeds of love, boundless as a dove.

PRAYER

In prayer profound, let silence guide,
Away from streets, where vainglory hides.
No theatrics grand, no boastful parade,
Seek the quiet room, where secrets are laid.

The Father unseen, in that sacred space,
Hears the whispered plea, beholds the grace.
Not in babbling words, nor showy array,
In simplicity kneel, let the heart convey.

Our Father in heaven, hallowed, revered,
May Your kingdom descend, may Your will be cleared.
The daily bread, our humble plea,
Forgiveness sought, as forgiven we be.

Lead us away from temptation's snare,
Deliver from evil, answer our prayer.
As we forgive, forgiveness we find,
In the vast expanse of the merciful kind.

FASTING

When fast you must, let not the facade,
Of hypocrites be your fasting's garb.
With somber visage, they parade,
Their piety for all displayed.

Disfigured faces, worn as a mask,

A vain attempt at a righteous task.
Their reward received in full,
For their boastful, public fasting's pull.

Yet when you fast, let not the guise,
Of sorrowed countenance be your prize.
Anoint your head with oil, wash your face,
In secret, find your sacred space.

Not for the eyes of the worldly crowd,
But unseen by the Father, humble and bowed.
In the quiet of your fasting's hour,
Shall come a reward, a heavenly dower.

TREASURES IN HEAVEN

In earthly realms, where treasures gleam,
Amassed by mortals, a transient dream.
Moths and vermin, their foes declare,
Destroying riches, beyond repair.

Thieves in stealth, a sinister art,
Steal away the treasures, rend apart.
Earthly vaults, no haven secure,
Lay bare the hearts, stripped and pure.

Yet seek, O soul, a celestial trove,
Where treasures dwell in realms above.
In heavens vast, where moths hold no sway,
No thief intrudes, no treasures decay.

For where your treasures find their place,
There, behold, your heart shall trace.
The eye, a lamp, reveals the path,

To treasures stored, in light's aftermath.

Healthy eyes, with radiant sheen,
Illuminate the soul's serene.
Darkened orbs, a shadowed state,
A realm consumed by ominous weight.

Two masters vie for fealty's claim,
God and Mammon, their echoing name.
A choice profound, with stakes untold,
Serve one, despise the other, as foretold.

The heart's allegiance, a solemn decree,
Divided not, but bound and free.
For in the service of coin and divine,
A mortal soul, at crossroads, must shine.

DO NOT WORRY

In the tapestry of mortal cares,
Woven worries, silent snares.
"Do not worry," the Master's decree,
Unfurls a lesson, profound and free.

Life, a banquet, beyond sustenance,
More than garments, a transient dance.
Behold the birds that grace the air,
No toil in fields, yet they find their fare.

The lilies fair, in radiant bloom,
Clothed by God, in nature's loom.
Solomon, arrayed in royal sheen,
Fades before this floral queen.

If grass that adorns the fleeting field,
Arrayed in beauty, its fate concealed,
God tends with care, will He not bestow,
On souls of little faith below?

Worry, a futile, fruitless art,
Adding naught to life's brief chart.
The Father knows what His children need,
In anxious pursuit, let the heart take heed.

Pagans chase ephemeral things,
Heavenly treasures, the soul sings.
Seek His kingdom, righteousness divine,
All else bestowed, in grace entwined.

Do not fret about the morrow's plight,
Sufficient for the day, its own fight.
In the present moment, troubles befall,
Tomorrow's worries, let them not enthrall.

JUDGING OTHERS

In judgment's court, a caution told,
Wisdom's tale, a truth unfold.
"Do not judge," the Master cried,
For with the measure cast, abide.

Specks and planks, in eyes concealed,
A hypocrite's veneer revealed.
"Why the speck," with plank unfurled,
In brother's eye, a blinded world?

Take heed, remove the timber vast,
Then clearly see, judgment cast.

Yet dogs, beware, sacred fare,
Pearls to pigs, a warning rare.

Guard the treasures, hold them near,
For trampling hooves, they do not bear.
In folly's grasp, sacred tossed,
Torn asunder, at great cost.

ASK, SEEK, KNOCK

Ask, and you shall receive, the Master's word,
Seek, and find the treasures by Him assured.
Knock, and the door to destiny shall swing,
For every earnest plea, a gracious offering.

A father's love, a lesson clear,
Bread, not stones, to the child so dear.
A fish, not a serpent's venomous coil,
Kindness given, not deceit and toil.

Evil though we be, with hearts impure,
Gifts of goodness, our love shall assure.
How much more, the Father's love above,
Bestows on those who ask, seek, and love.

In all things, treat others as you would be,
A golden rule, the heart's true key.
Thus, the Law and Prophets' essence true,
In love's embrace, life's journey pursue.

THE NARROW AND WIDE GATES

Behold, two gates that stand in stark divide,

The wide, inviting, and the narrow, wise.
The broad road tempts with its alluring call,
Many heed its whispers, alas, to fall.

Oh, the multitude that enters through,
The wide gate, blind to the path askew.
A highway broad, adorned with transient bliss,
Yet veiled in shadows, leading to the abyss.

But lo, discern the gate of humble size,
The narrow entrance, unseen by many eyes.
A road less traveled, winding and steep,
To life eternal, where the faithful reap.

Few, the seekers of this hidden gate,
Navigate the path, their hearts elate.
For there, the journey is not without strife,
Yet leads to everlasting, abundant life.

TRUE AND FALSE PROPHETS

Beware the prophets, robed in woolen guise,
Yet inwardly, the wolf within them lies.
In sheepish garb, they weave deceitful art,
Their words, a guise to mask a darker heart.

Survey the orchard of the prophet's creed,
A tree, by fruits, will show its chosen seed.
From thorn and thistle, grapes will not descend,
Nor figs, where bitter branches find their end.

For every tree, in its own kind, does bear,
Be it good or bad, the fruit laid bare.
A tree that bears good fruit, a treasure rare,

While wicked roots yield fruits of deep despair.

By fruits, the true from false shall be defined,
The fire awaits, where thorns and brambles bind.
Thus, in the orchard of life's vast domain,
By fruits, the false prophet shall face his bane.

TRUE AND FALSE DISCIPLES

"Not all who cry, 'Lord, Lord,' shall pass the gate,
For words alone won't open heaven's fate.
The kingdom's key lies in the Father's will,
A steadfast heart, His purpose to fulfill.

On that great day, when judgment's trumpets sound,
Many will claim deeds on celestial ground.
'In prophecy and miracles,' they'll plea,
'In your name, Lord, we shaped our destiny.'

Yet, I will say, 'I never knew your face,
Depart from me, evildoers, from this place.'
Not in grand words or deeds lies virtue's grace,
But in the humble heart, seeking God's embrace."

THE WISE AND FOOLISH BUILDERS

A parable unfolds, a truth to explore.
He who heeds and builds on words divine,
A fortress on solid rock does he design.

The heavens wept, the tempest's fury wild,
Yet, the wise man's abode serenely smiled.

Unyielding, the foundation stood secure,
Against the storm, its strength did endure.

Contrast this with a tale of folly told,
A heedless builder, dreams in sand unfold.
Upon the shifting grains, his mansion grand,
Met with ruin when storms lashed the land.

As Jesus spoke, authority imbued each word,
The crowds amazed; His teachings heard.
Not as scribes of old, with learned script,
But with heavenly power, His wisdom equipped."

JESUS HEALS A MAN WITH LEPROSY

"Down from heights, where mountaintops do kiss the sky,
A multitude in tow, a following nigh.
Among them, a figure, plagued by leprosy's blight,
Approached the Lord, seeking solace and light.

Kneeling low before the sovereign divine,
He implores, 'Lord, if willing, make me thine.'
The Savior, moved, extends His healing hand,
'I am willing,' He declares, 'be cleansed, O man!'

A touch, a word, a miraculous decree,
Leprosy's chains shattered; the captive set free.
'Quiet,' Jesus bids, 'tell no one, depart,
To the priest, your healing, a testimony, a start.'"

THE FAITH OF THE CENTURION

"In Capernaum's embrace, where shadows wane,

A centurion, a seeker of divine balm, not in vain.
'My servant, paralyzed, tormented in despair,
Lord, I implore, extend Your healing care.'

Jesus, inquired, 'Shall I come and mend?
Shall I, in mercy, on your plea attend?'
The centurion, humble, spoke with deep respect,
'Not under my roof, Lord, such honor to expect.

Speak but the word, and healing shall descend,
For I, too, am beneath authority's trend.
I command, they obey, whether near or far,
As You command, healing like a radiant star.'

Amazement graced Jesus, His words profound,
'In Israel, such faith, nowhere to be found.'
He foretold, 'From east and west they shall come,
To feast with patriarchs in the eternal kingdom.'

The centurion's trust, a beacon so bright,
Jesus declared, 'As you believed, in faith's light,
Go, witness the miracle your belief has won.'
And the servant, healed, under the setting sun.

JESUS HEALS MANY

"In Peter's dwelling, by the lakeside abode,
Jesus, the healer, on a righteous road.
There, Peter's kin, with fever's chains confined,
Lay in unrest, a captive to its bind.

The Master approached, touched with grace,
Fever fled, leaving no lingering trace.
She rose, renewed, from affliction's plight,

A servant now to the Healer of the night.

As dusk unfurled its shroud on the land,
A multitude gathered, a desperate band.
Demon-tormented, the sick and the frail,
Seeking solace, a remedy to assail.

With a word, He expelled each darkened guest,
The afflicted found solace, in His mercy, blessed.
Thus fulfilled Isaiah's prophetic decree,
'Bearing our infirmities, setting captives free.'"

THE COST OF FOLLOWING JESUS

"As the throng around Him did amass,
Jesus commanded, 'Cross the lake, bypass.'
A teacher of law, in fervor and zeal,
Declared, 'I'll follow, the journey I feel.'

To him, Jesus spoke of a truth profound,
'Foxes find dens, and birds' nests abound.
Yet the Son of Man, roaming without rest,
No place to lay His weary head to nest.'

Another disciple, with duty entwined,
Entreated, 'Allow me to bury, in kind,
My father, now passed, in the grave to repose,
Then follow thereafter, where Your calling goes.'

Jesus replied, with a call unbending,
'Follow Me now, let the dead be attending.
To bury their own, in the graves they've sown,
The living, with Me, My path shall be known.'"

JESUS CALMS THE STORM

"In the vessel, they embarked, the disciples and He,
Jesus and His followers sailed upon the sea.
Suddenly, a tempest, fierce and wild,
Storm winds howling, like a scornful child.

Waves, like giants, their fury did display,
Swelling, crashing, threatening to betray.
The fragile boat, in the tumultuous spree,
Yet, Jesus, undisturbed, lay asleep by the sea.

'Disciples!' they cried, with voices distressed,
'Lord, save us! Drowning, we're pressed!'
'Oh, you of little faith,' He calmly addressed,
'Why such fear in your hearts, so distressed?'

Rising, He faced the tempest's roar,
Rebuked the winds, the waves implore.
In an instant, the chaos began to cease,
A tranquil calm, the waters found peace.

Amazement gripped those witnesses true,
'What kind of man is this, we construe?
Even the winds and waves, by His decree,
Bow in homage to Him, the Lord of the Sea!'"

JESUS RESTORES TWO DEMON-POSSESSED MEN

"To the Gadarenes' shore, Jesus set His course,
A land of demons, a place of dark force.

Two men, possessed, their minds ensnared,
Violent, fierce, none could have dared.

'What do you seek, Son of God?' they cried,
'Have you come to torment?' their fears implied.
Far off, a herd of pigs did graze,
A plan unfolded in the demonic maze.

'Begging, they pled, 'Into the swine, us send,
A fate with pigs, O merciful Friend.'
'Go!' His command, the demons obey,
Into the pigs, a dark array.

Down the slope, they rushed with speed,
Into the lake, a swinish stampede.
A drowning end for the legion unbound,
The watery grave, their destiny found.

Those who tended, alarmed, they fled,
To the town, the tale widespread.
Demoniacs healed, the pigs now deceased,
A spectacle strange, as chaos increased.

The townsfolk, wary, their fear in sight,
Met Jesus, their hearts in troubled plight.
'Leave our region!' their voices entreat,
A plea for departure, the Savior's defeat."

JESUS FORGIVES AND HEALS A PARALYZED MAN

"In the boat, on waters wide,
Jesus sailed to His town with tide.

A paralyzed soul, on a mat they bring,
Their faith proclaimed, a hopeful fling.

'Son, be of courage, your sins forgiven,'
Jesus spoke, a grace-driven leaven.
But whispers rose, the scribes' disdain,
'Blasphemy!' they thought, in secret strain.

Jesus, discerning their hearts' dissent,
Challenged their doubt, their evil intent.
'Which is simpler?' His question posed,
'Forgiveness declared or limbs composed?'

To show His power, His authority,
He said to the man, 'Rise and be free!'
The paralyzed, now on his feet,
Took up his mat, a miracle complete.

Amazed, the crowd, in reverence stood,
Witness to grace, they understood.
A man, with power from heaven's span,
Forgiving sins, the Healer of man."

JESUS QUESTIONED ABOUT FASTING

"John's disciples in earnest query came,
'Why fast not yours, while we and Pharisees the ritual claim?'
Jesus replied with wisdom rare,
'Guests of the bridegroom feast, not fast, in joy they share.

When the bridegroom parts, and time draws nigh,
Then shall my disciples in fasting comply.
Unshrunk cloth on the aged torn,
Worsens the tear, the old is worn.

New wine into old skins is not poured,
For bursting skins, and loss, is then assured.
New wine demands a fresh embrace,
In new skins, preserved, its vibrant grace."

JESUS RAISES A DEAD GIRL AND HEALS A SICK WOMAN

"While Jesus spoke, a leader, grief-stricken,
Kneeled before him, his daughter's life taken.
'Come, lay your hand, and she shall rise,'
Pleaded the father, hope in his eyes.

Jesus, with disciples in tow,
Rose, with purpose, to the father's woe.
In that moment, a woman in despair,
Twelve years in ailment, sought a cure so rare.

She touched his cloak, a silent plea,
'Only a touch, and healed I'll be.'
Jesus turned, her eyes he met,
'Daughter, take heart, thy faith has set.

The healing course,' his words declared,
Instantly, the ailment bared.
Within the leader's house, a scene so dire,
A crowd in uproar, mourning, and lyre.

Jesus declared, 'She sleeps, not dead,'
Laughter followed; scoffs were spread.
He put the crowd outside, took her hand,
The girl arose at his command.

News like wildfire swiftly spread its wing,
Echoing through the region, words took spring.
Across the land, the tale widespread,
A vibrant rumor, in every ear, it tread.

JESUS HEALS THE BLIND AND THE MUTE

Through dusty paths, where shadows play their part,
Two blind men, voices ringing, sought with heart,
"Son of David, mercy on us shed!"
Their plea, like distant echoes, touched he who led.

Into the chamber, where silence breathed,
The blind men followed; their hope bequeathed.
"Do you believe in my power to bestow?"
"Yes, Lord," they cried, their fervent faith to show.

With gentle touch upon their sightless gaze,
He spoke, "As faith ordains, see through life's maze."
Restored, their eyes beheld the radiant day,
Yet, sternly warned, let not this tale display.

The mute, entrapped by a demon's cruel might,
Brought before the healer, veiled in night.
With a word, the silence was shattered wide,
The crowd in awe, "A marvel!" they cried.

But Pharisees, in their righteous disdain,
Accused, "By demons, he this power did gain."
Yet, undeterred, the healer pressed his quest,
To mend the broken, give the suffering rest.

THE WORKERS ARE FEW

Through towns and hamlets, Jesus journeyed far,
Teaching in synagogues, a radiant star.
Proclaiming the good news, a healing hand,
Every ailment and sickness, at his command.

The crowds, a sea of faces, vast and grand,
In their plight, like sheep, without a shepherd's hand.
With compassion stirred, his heart a tender flame,
Harassed and helpless, he called them by name.

To disciples gathered, in a solemn tone,
"The harvest is plentiful, a truth well-known.
But workers are scarce in this vast expanse,
Pray to the Lord of harvest, take up the chance.

Ask that workers may rise, a devoted band,
Into the fields, the ripened harvest land.
To reap the souls in need of saving grace,
Bring light to every corner, every space."

JESUS SENDS OUT THE TWELVE

In the hallowed gathering of the chosen twelve,
Christ bestowed authority, a mission to delve.
To drive impure spirits, and heal the frail,
Disease and sickness, their charge to assail.

Simon, named Peter, first among the kin,
Andrew, his brother, the sacred origin.
James and John, Zebedee's noble pair,
Philip and Bartholomew, a chosen share.

Thomas, Matthew, the tax collector's toll,
James, son of Alphaeus, Thaddaeus' soul.
Simon the Zealot, with fervent might,
Judas Iscariot, who'd betray the light.

To these twelve, Jesus sent with divine might,
Instructions clear, in the morning light.
"Among the Gentiles, do not tread,
Nor enter Samaritan towns," he said.

Go to the lost sheep of Israel, the fold,
As you journey forth, the message bold:
"The kingdom of heaven, near and wide,
Proclaim to all, a truth to confide.

Heal the sick, raise the dead from their sleep,
Cleanse the lepers, their souls to keep.
Drive out the demons, in my name,
Freely given, this power's flame.

As you have received, in abundance pure,
Freely give, and salvation ensure.
A divine mandate, a sacred chore,
The disciples embarked on this holy tour."

In the sacred charge to apostles true,
Christ commanded, "No gold, no silver imbue.
No copper, no belts, no bag for your quest,
No extra attire, no sandals on your quest.

A worker's worth lies not in earthly wealth,
But in the labor, the spirit's stealth.
As you traverse towns on this holy ride,
Seek out the worthy, in whom to confide.

Give your greeting as you enter each abode,
Let peace descend where worthy hearts are stowed.
But if rejection meets your earnest word,
Shake off the dust, let your peace be unheard.

Sent as sheep amid the wolves' cruel mirth,
Be shrewd as snakes, yet gentle as the earth.
Guard yourselves well, for trials await,
Councils and floggings, at the synagogues' gate.

Brought before governors, kings of might,
Witnesses you'll be, in the Gentiles' sight.
Fear not the words when persecution nears,
The Spirit will speak, calming your fears.

For on your account, judgments will arise,
Sodom and Gomorrah, with tearful skies.
More bearable their fate on judgment's day,
Than for the town that turns you away.

Sent like sheep, amidst the wolves' cruel stare,
With divine guidance, the burdens to bear.
Fear not the trials, the Spirit's decree,
Guiding your words, setting your message free.

In days to come, a somber fate unveiled,
Brother to brother, in betrayal, assailed.
Father against child, rebellion's grim art,
Children condemning parents to deathly part.

Hated by all, for the name they bear,
The faithful, the firm, salvation will share.
Persecuted, in one place they roam,
Fleeing to others, seeking a new home.

Student nor servant ascends above,
The teacher, the master, the source thereof.
Called Beelzebul, the head of the house,
How much more, the members, hatred to arouse.

Fear not the shadows, secrets untold,
What's whispered in darkness, let truth unfold.
From rooftops proclaim, in the light of day,
What's shared in secret, don't hide away.

Fear not those who end the mortal breath,
But dread the One who controls life and death.
Two sparrows for a penny, yet none fall,
Beyond the Father's watchful thrall.

The hairs on your head, counted with care,
Fear not, for you're valued, beyond compare.
Acknowledge the Savior, before all men,
In heaven, He'll declare you His own, and then,

Disown the Lord, deny His embrace,
And in heaven, you'll find no resting place.
Not peace but a sword, the earth shall know,
Families divided, each against its own woe.

Love not your kin above the sacred call,
For love misplaced, in worth shall surely fall.
Not father, mother, son, or daughter dear,
Above your Lord, let no affection steer.

Take up the cross, the burdens that it bears,
Follow the path where suffering declares.
Who clings to life shall lose it in the strife,
But in surrender finds eternal life.

Who welcomes you, extends a welcome grand,

A welcome for the Lord at your command.
Prophet or righteous one, their deeds entwine,
Rewards for those who honor the divine.

Even a cup of cold water's grace,
To the humble disciple's seeking face.
No act too small, no kindness left unheard,
For in such acts, the divine is stirred.

So, heed the call, the worthy path discern,
In love and sacrifice, true life you earn.
For those who follow in the footsteps trod,
Shall find their worthy, everlasting God.

JESUS SENDS OUT THE SEVENTY-TWO

Upon the Lord's decree, seventy-two,
Sent forth in pairs, their mission in view.
To every town and every space,
Where Jesus, the Savior, would set his pace.

"The harvest is plenty," the Master declared,
"But few are the workers, the burden shared.
Pray to the Lord of the harvest, plead,
For laborers sent to the fields in need."

As lambs midst wolves, they journeyed the way,
No purse, no bag, no sandals to sway.
On the road, no greetings to exchange,
Their purpose clear, no time for the strange.

In each house, the proclamation, "Peace!"
Rest on those who let tensions cease.
Eat what is given, their wages deserved,

No wandering, their message preserved.

Welcomed in towns, embrace what's shared,
Heal the sick, make known, the kingdom declared.
Yet in unwelcome places, a solemn vow,
Shake off the dust, a warning to endow.

"Woe to you, Chorazin, Bethsaida's plight,
Had Tyre seen miracles, they'd have repented in fright.
More bearable for Tyre and Sidon's kin,
At judgment's gate, their fate less grim."

Capernaum, too, a dire descent,
No heavenly ascent, but Hades' intent.
The ones who reject, reject divine grace,
A consequence dire, a future they'll face.

Seventy-two, with joy in their eyes,
Demons subdued under heavenly skies.
"I saw Satan fall, like lightning's bright flash,
Authority given, in my name, to smash.

Snakes and scorpions, beneath your feet,
No harm befalls, in victory sweet.
Rejoice not in spirits, yielding to your nod,
But that your names are penned in heaven, of God."

Jesus, full of joy, the Holy Spirit's embrace,
Praised the Father's hidden wisdom and grace.
Revealed to the simple, the wise left blind,
A truth divine, in mystery entwined.

"All things by my Father entrusted to me,
The Son knows the Father, and the Father, He.
Blessed are your eyes, witnessing this sight,
Prophets and kings longed, in vain, for your light."

JESUS AND JOHN THE BAPTIST

In Galilee's towns where teachings resound,
Jesus, the Messiah, spreads truths unbound.
From prison's confines, John sends forth in quest,
"Do we await, or seek another's bequest?"

"Go, tell John," Jesus spoke with gentle might,
What ears now hear and witness in the light.
Blind eyes behold, the lame on paths now tread,
Lepers find cleansing, life among the dead.

The deaf, now hear the melody of sound,
Good news proclaimed to the poor around.
"Blessed are those who stumble not," said He,
On the account of deeds performed by me.

As John's disciples departed with grace,
Jesus turns to the crowd, the people in space.
"What sought you in the wilderness so wide?
A reed by the wind, or a kingly stride?"

"Not a man in fine attire, adorned in splendor,
Those dwell in palaces, their essence tender.
A prophet, yes, more than you comprehend,
He prepares the way, heralding without end."

In words inscribed, "I send my messenger true,
To pave the path ahead, preceding you."
A herald bold, a precursor in stride,
Guiding the way where destinies abide.

Truly I tell, among those born of earth,

No greater rose, a herald of worth.
John, the Baptist, a voice in the wild,
Yet the least in heaven, by grace, compiled.

Since John's days, the kingdom endured strife,
Subjected to violence, the battle of life.
Prophets and laws, their tales did foretell,
Yet in John's advent, their echoes swell.

If ears be keen, heed the truth untold,
John, the herald, in spirit is bold.
Elijah's guise upon his frame,
He who has ears, grasp the celestial claim.

A generation's riddle, a puzzle in play,
Children in markets, their tunes portray.
A dirge unsung, a dance unled,
They find fault in paths, both beggar and bread.

John, abstinent, they labeled possessed,
The Son, feasting, they called a jest.
Yet wisdom's judgment, through deeds is shown,
A truth transcendent, in history sown.

WOE ON UNREPENTANT TOWNS

Woe, the Savior's voice in thunderous scorn,
A lament for towns where miracles were born.
Chorazin, Bethsaida, hear the dire refrain,
For unrepentant hearts, redemption's loss and pain.

In Chorazin's streets, where wonders graced the air,
No repentance found; in indifference they snare.
Bethsaida, oh Bethsaida, with miracles adorned,

Yet in stubbornness, repentance is scorned.

Tyre and Sidon, distant in their plea,
Would, in sackcloth, bow if these miracles they'd see.
More bearable, their judgment, in the coming day,
Than for Chorazin and Bethsaida's way.

Capernaum, once lifted to celestial heights,
Now faces the descent to Hades' nights.
Miracles bloomed, yet repentance they spurn,
More bearable for Sodom, a dire truth to learn.

In the tapestry of judgment, woven with fate's command,
Unfurled, a dire warning, echoing through the land.
Woe to unrepentant towns, in shadows they are hurled,
In the stern and righteous judgment of the world.

THE FATHER REVEALED IN THE SON

In that moment, Jesus spoke with praise,
To the Father, Lord of the celestial maze.
Hidden from the wise, the learned, profound,
Revealed to children, in simplicity, they're crowned.

"All things to me, the Father has bestowed,
The Son, by the Father's wisdom, is known.
None knows the Father, save the chosen Son,
Revealing the mysteries to the chosen one.

"Come to me, burdened souls, in distress,
I offer rest, a haven, a divine caress.
Shoulder my yoke, learn in humility,
Gentle and humble, find rest, souls set free.

"My yoke is light, the burden is sweet,
In the gentle rhythm, weary hearts shall beat.
Come, all who are laden, with burdens too vast,
In my embrace, find peace at last."

JESUS IS LORD OF THE SABBATH

In the fields of gold, on the Sabbath morn,
Jesus and disciples, weary and worn.
Hunger led them to pick the grain,
A deed that Pharisees deemed a disdain.

"Unlawful!" they cried, their voices raised,
As the disciples in hunger grazed.
Jesus, in response, wisdom unfurled,
Recalled David's tale in the ancient world.

"In God's house, David and his kin,
Ate the sacred bread, lawful for priests within.
Yet, here stands One, greater than the temple's might,
The Son of Man, the Lord of Sabbath light.

"Understanding not these words profound,
'I desire mercy, not sacrifice,' shall resound.
Innocence condemned, if mercy you deny,
For the Son of Man, the Sabbath does rely."

From field to synagogue, the journey extends,
A man with a withered hand, his fate depends.
Pharisees, cunning, seeking strife,
Pose a question, "Healing on the Sabbath, lawful life?"

Jesus, with reason, their hearts to probe,
"If a sheep falls, will you not disrobe,

To rescue it from the Sabbath pit?
How much more a soul, won't you admit?

"A person is worth more, don't you see?
It's lawful to do good, even on the Sabbath plea."
To the man, "Stretch out your hand," he said,
Restored and healed, by mercy led.

But the Pharisees, in shadows dark,
Plotting to silence the Sabbath's spark.
In their hearts, a murderous scheme,
Against the Lord of Sabbath, they deem.

GOD'S CHOSEN SERVANT

In a quiet retreat, Jesus withdrew,
From the clamor and crowds, the multitude grew.
A multitude trailing, seeking relief,
For in Jesus' presence, healing was chief.

He healed the afflicted, the sick, and the sore,
Yet cautioned, "Tell not, the secret adore."
A prophet's decree, Isaiah's tale,
In the quiet fulfillment of the chosen, unveiled.

"Behold my servant, my chosen delight,
My Spirit upon him, a beacon of light.
Justice to nations, his proclamation,
No voice in the streets, no loud exclamation.

"A bruised reed, he won't snap nor break,
A flickering wick, he won't forsake.
Till justice prevails, in victory's embrace,
In his name, the nations find hope's grace."

JESUS AND BEELZEBUL

In a tale of old, a blind and mute,
Brought forth, a man in demon's suit.
To Jesus, they brought, a soul in plight,
Seeking the cure, to restore his sight.

With a touch divine, a sacred art,
Jesus healed the wounded, a noble part.
The crowd in awe, a question arose,
Could he be David's Son, as rumor goes?

But the Pharisees, with hearts so cold,
Sought a sinister tale, a story bold.
"It's Beelzebul's work, this demon's bane,
Not by God's grace, but a devil's reign."

Jesus, discerning their thoughts concealed,
Spoke wisdom profound, the truth revealed.
"A kingdom divided, a doomed decree,
By Beelzebul cast, how could it be?

"If Satan fights Satan, in discord's dance,
His kingdom crumbles, there's no chance.
But if by God's Spirit, my power's might,
The kingdom of God is in your sight.

"Picture a burglar, cunning and sly,
To loot a stronghold, the strong must tie.
So, to bind the evil, and demons throng,
My deeds proclaim, the kingdom strong.

"Stand with me, or against me fall,

Gather with purpose, or scatter all.
Sin and slander, forgiveness may find,
But blasphemy dark, a sin maligned.

"Words hold power, judge them with care,
A tree's true nature, its fruit will bear.
Vipers, beware, your venomous hiss,
From hearts impure, tongues cannot miss.

"Speak good, be good, from the heart's decree,
For judgment awaits, a day to see.
Words are the keys, to freedom or plight,
By your own tongue, you'll be judged in light."

THE SIGN OF JONAH

In the days of old, the Pharisees' plea,
"Show us a sign, a marvel to see!"
Jesus, the Teacher, replied with scorn,
"A wicked generation, by signs is torn.

"Only the sign of Jonah I shall reveal,
As he in the fish, three days did feel.
So, the Son of Man, in the earth's embrace,
Three days and nights shall find his place.

"The men of Nineveh, at judgment's call,
Will rise against you and condemn your fall.
They repented, heed Jonah's call,
Yet, greater than he stands amid you all.

"The Queen of the South, from distant land,
Will rise in judgment, a righteous stand.
She sought Solomon's wisdom divine,

Yet, a greater than Solomon is in your line.

"When a spirit impure, from a person departs,
Through desolate realms, seeking rest, it charts.
Finding no solace, it schemes and returns,
To the vacant abode, where the fire of evil burns.

"Seven spirits, more vile, it marshals in tow,
Into the dwelling, where shadows grow.
The final state, more wretched than first,
A warning to heed, a tale of the cursed.

"This wicked generation, take heed,
For your fate may mirror the demon's greed.
Repent, seek wisdom, and turn from the wrong,
Lest your final state be worse than the strong."

JESUS' MOTHER AND BROTHERS

In the midst of discourse, a crowd around,
His mother and kin sought words profound.
Standing outside, longing to impart,
Their thoughts and concerns to his sacred heart.

"Your mother and brothers, they await,
Yearning to talk, to communicate."
To this, Jesus pondered, profound and deep,
His response, a secret, his sentiments to keep.

"Who is my mother? My brothers, who be?
Look to my disciples, around you, you'll see.
For those who fulfill my Father's decree,
Are kin, sister, brother, and mother to me.

"The ties of blood, though strong and true,
Are surpassed by a bond that I construe.
A kinship divine, in the heavenly name,
For those who do His will, our bond is the same.

"So, disciples, companions, bearers of the Word,
In you, my kinship is clearly heard.
Beyond flesh and blood, in a spiritual embrace,
A family formed by heavenly grace.

THE PARABLE OF THE SOWER

Upon a day, by the lake's gentle shore,
Jesus spoke in parables, wisdom to pour.
In a boat, He sat, the crowds stood near,
Eager souls longing, His teachings to hear.

"A farmer, with purpose, his seed did sow,
Scattering it wide, watching it grow.
Yet, on varied ground, the seed did fall,
Each fate, a tale, a lesson for all.

"Some on the path, where the birds did feast,
Devoured the promise, the yield decreased.
Rocky ground, with soil so thin,
Sprouted swiftly, but couldn't stay in.

"When the sun's heat scorched the shallow earth,
The plants, they withered, proving their worth.
Thorns, in their cruelty, entangled the seeds,
Choked out the life, fulfilling dark deeds.

"But some on good soil, found a home,
Roots took hold, and a crop was sown.

A hundred, sixty, or thirtyfold,
The yield of the fertile ground it told.

"Disciples, with queries, sought to know,
Why parables in stories you sow?
To them, the secrets of heaven unfold,
But to others, mysteries remain untold.

"In their eyes, they do not see,
Deaf to truth, though hearing be.
A prophecy fulfilled in their deafened ear,
Hardened hearts, with understanding unclear.

"Blessed are you, who grasp the seed,
Who see and hear, who've chosen to heed.
Prophets and righteous, longed in vain,
For the sights and sounds, you now attain.

"The parable unfolds, its meaning revealed,
A tale of hearts, in varied fields.
The path, the rocks, thorns entwined,
Good soil, the heart, with understanding aligned.

"Let those with ears, perceive and glean,
The wisdom of the Sower, a lesson keen.
In the kingdom's message, let understanding rise,
A harvest abundant, under heaven's skies."

THE PARABLE OF THE WEEDS

In parables profound, the Teacher spoke,
Of wheat and weeds, in the field He woke.
A man, a sower, his good seed cast,
In the fertile soil, his hope held fast.

Yet, while the world lay in slumber deep,
A foe, in shadows, his deceit did reap.
Weeds entwined with the wheat so fair,
A silent invasion in the midnight air.

As wheat sprouted, heads raised high,
The weeds, a secret, began to vie.
The servants puzzled, in dismay,
"How weeds intrude where good held sway?"

To the master, they did inquire,
"Did you not sow with pure desire?
An enemy has sown the tares,
Shall we pull them, unawares?"

"Nay," the master's wise decree,
"Lest wheat's roots entangled be.
Let both, in tandem, earth embrace,
Until the harvest, in its grace.

"At harvest's call, the reapers near,
Weeds bundled for the flames severe.
Then gather wheat, a golden yield,
Into the barn, the bounty sealed."

THE PARABLES OF THE MUSTARD SEED AND THE YEAST

In parables rich, the Master spoke,
Of seeds and yeast, a vision woke.
A mustard seed, so small, so slight,
A man planted in the soft moonlight.

Though tiny, a seed in the fertile ground,
It burgeoned forth; a tree profound.
From smallest start to grandest show,
In branches, birds found places to go.

The kingdom of heaven, a mustard seed,
From minuscule start to towering deed.
A parable woven with nature's grace,
A lesson unveiled in this sacred space.

Another tale, the Master spun,
Of a woman with yeast, her work begun.
Into the flour, sixty pounds or more,
She kneaded the leaven, a secret core.

As the yeast worked through the dough,
So did the kingdom's influence grow.
Hidden truths, in parables told,
From ancient times, their secrets unfold.

The crowd, enraptured, listened near,
As the Teacher's words, like music, clear.
In parables, profound and deep,
The hidden truths, from silence, sweep.

For in each tale, a world concealed,
A mystery through time revealed.
"I open my mouth in parables," said He,
Uttering truths since the world's decree.

THE PARABLE OF THE WEEDS EXPLAINED

Into the hallowed house, away from the crowd,

The disciples approached, their voices, not loud.
"Explain the parable," they implored, sincere,
Of the weeds in the field, a mystery unclear.

The Son of Man spoke, His gaze profound,
"The sower of good seed, in this story, is found.
The field, vast and wide, is the world we tread,
The good seed, the righteous, by virtue led."

"But, alas, there are weeds, sown by the night,
Spawn of the evil one, causing blight.
The adversary, the devil, in sinister glee,
Sows discord and sin, in the shadows free."

"The harvest, the end, when angels descend,
To separate the wheat from the weeds, they attend.
With flames, the weeds will meet their fate,
In the fire's embrace, their destiny's weight."

"As angels wield justice, in the kingdom's name,
Sin and evil purged, in the cleansing flame.
The blazing furnace, a solemn decree,
Where weeping and gnashing, the outcome we see."

"But the righteous, oh, the righteous, shall gleam,
Like the radiant sun in the Father's grand scheme.
Eternal brilliance, in the kingdom they find,
A celestial glow, to the pure of heart assigned."

"Let those with ears, attend to this voice,
A parable's wisdom, a celestial choice.
The mysteries revealed, in these words so clear,
As the Son of Man spoke, His disciples drew near."

THE PARABLES OF THE HIDDEN TREASURE AND THE PEARL

In the kingdom's realm, a tale unfolds,
Of treasures hidden, in lands untold.
A man, in fortune's dance, a chance bestowed,
A field concealing wealth, in stories old.

The kingdom's secret, a treasure deep,
In soil concealed, a secret to keep.
A man, with fortune's gaze, the treasure found,
Joy in his heart, a jubilant sound.

He hides it again, this precious prize,
Secures the field, beneath open skies.
With all he owns, a sacrifice bold,
To claim the treasure, a story to be told.

Sold are his riches, possessions vast,
For the hidden treasure, a die is cast.
In the kingdom's field, a saga spun,
A man, in joy, his quest is won.

Again, the kingdom's tale takes flight,
A merchant questing, in morning light.
For pearls of worth, in the vast expanse,
He seeks a gem, with a hopeful glance.

A pearl of great value, the merchant spies,
His heart aflame, with longing eyes.
He sells his all, possessions grand,
To grasp the pearl, a jewel in hand.

In the kingdom's lore, these tales entwine,

Of treasures sought, a destiny divine.
Sold are riches, cast away,
For the kingdom's gems, in the light of day.

THE PARABLE OF THE NET

In the kingdom's vast and watery domain,
A net descended, a celestial chain.
Into the lake, its embrace unfurled,
Gathering all fish, from the watery world.

The net, when full, with a laboring strain,
Was drawn to shore, where the fishermen reign.
On the sandy banks, a sorting decree,
Good fish collected, the bad cast free.

At the age's end, when the curtain falls,
Angelic heralds, duty calls.
The wicked severed, from righteous kin,
To the fiery furnace, the wages of sin.

Weeping and gnashing, in fiery abyss,
The fate of the wicked, a lamentable hiss.
"Do you fathom these tales?" to disciples, inquired,
"Understanding blooms?" they earnestly aspired.

With a nod and a yes, the disciples reply,
To the Teacher, their hearts testify.
"Thus, a scholar divine, in the kingdom's embrace,
Brings forth from his storeroom, both old and new grace."

A PROPHET WITHOUT HONOR

Concluding parables, Jesus journeyed on,
To his homeland, where he had drawn
His first earthly breath, among familiar kin,
In the synagogue, teaching to begin.

Astonishment echoed in the crowded hall,
"From whence comes this wisdom, this power enthralled?"
"He's the carpenter's son, this cannot be true,
Mary's son, with brothers and sisters in view."

With offense brewing in their skeptical gaze,
They doubted the prophet, his miraculous ways.
"A prophet, dishonored in his own dwelling,
A town without honor, a foretelling."

To their unyielding hearts, miracles were denied,
Faith's absence, a barrier, miracles to hide.
In that hometown of doubt, where familiarity breeds,
The prophet moved on, unheeded by their needs.

JOHN THE BAPTIST BEHEADED

In the realm where shadows dance and rumors twine,
Herod, the tetrarch, hears tales divine.
Whispers weave through the corridors of might,
Of miracles and wonders, a celestial light.

"This is John the Baptist, risen, they say,
With powers divine in the light of day."
Yet John, imprisoned, for truth he stood,
Against Herod's union, a bond not good.

A voice of conscience, a prophet bold,
In prison's grip, his fate foretold.

Herodias, a vengeful flame,
Herod's fear, a prophet's name.

A dance, a birthday, a maiden's art,
Herod, enthralled, played a dangerous part.
A promise sworn, an oath to fill,
A dark request, a scene of ill.

"Bring me John's head on a platter," she pled,
Prompted by a mother with vengeance bred.
The king, distressed, by oath entwined,
In prison's chamber, John assigned.

Beheaded, the prophet, in silence lay,
His disciples came, took his form away.
In sacred soil, his body found rest,
Whispers carried to Jesus, on winds abreast.

JESUS FEEDS THE FIVE THOUSAND

In the hush of twilight, by the waterside,
Jesus withdrew, seeking solace, a quiet tide.
Yet, the crowd, relentless, on foot, they came,
From distant towns, drawn by his healing flame.

As he stepped ashore, a multitude stood,
Faces weary, hearts longing for good.
Compassion welled in his kindling eyes,
Healing the sick beneath the open skies.

The sun descended, a golden sphere,
Disciples spoke, voices laced with fear.
“This place is remote, daylight wanes,
Release the crowd, let them seek their gains.”

Jesus, with eyes like stars ablaze,
Spoke with a power that silenced the haze.
“They need not depart, nourish them here,
Provide the feast, dispel every fear.”

“We possess but five loaves and fish, no more,”
The disciples, their provisions meager than before.
“Bring them to me,” his voice serene,
Upon the grass, the people convened.

Five loaves, two fish, a meager array,
Yet, with a glance to heaven, he began to pray.
Breaking bread, a sacred rite,
Multiplying abundance in the fading light.

Disciples served the miraculous fare,
A feast from scarcity, a banquet rare.
Five thousand men, with women and child,
A multitude fed, their hunger beguiled.

Satisfied, they sat 'neath the evening's gleam,
Leftovers gathered, more than it seemed.
Twelve baskets brimming, an abundance told,
A miracle spun, a tale of old.

JESUS WALKS ON THE WATER

Upon the night's dark, tempest sea,
A boat set sail, disciples three.
Jesus, the crowd dismissed on shore,
To the mountainside, sought silence more.

Alone, in prayer, on the mountain's crest,

He communed with the One he loved best.
The boat, afloat, a distant glimmer,
Buffeted by waves, the sea's fierce shimmer.

Before dawn's light, in quiet descent,
Jesus walked on waves, a miracle sent.
Disciples, shadows in fear's embrace,
Saw him near, a spectral face.

"A ghost!" they cried in terror's breath,
As wind and wave conspired in death.
"Take courage," Jesus' voice, the night's balm,
"Fear not, I am he, in the storm's calm."

"Lord, if it's you," brave Peter pled,
"Call me forth on the water's bed."
"Come," said Jesus, a command so clear,
Peter stepped out, overcoming fear.

On liquid paths, faith's dance begun,
A disciple walking, the impossible done.
Yet, the wind, with a howling sound,
Disturbed the peace that faith had found.

Fear crept in, faith started to sway,
Peter, sinking, began to pray.
"Lord, save me!" his desperate plea,
In the midst of the tempest's glee.

Jesus, hand outstretched, caught the sinking,
Spoke to Peter, in love unshrinking,
"O, you of little faith," the night's rebuke,
"Why did you doubt, in waters piqued?"

Together to the boat, they climbed,

The wind, in awe, ceased its crime.
In the vessel, worship's song,
"Truly, Son of God," the voices strong.

At Gennesaret's shore, the journey ends,
News of Jesus, the land transcends.
Sick and broken, to him they came,
Touching his cloak, they were never the same.

In the shadow of the mountains steep,
A tale of faith on the tempest's sweep.
The boat sailed on, the wind laid low,
In the echoes of miracles, the waters' glow.

THAT WHICH DEFILES

From Jerusalem's halls, Pharisees came,
Accusing disciples, they played their game.
"Why neglect tradition, elders' decree?
Unwashed hands, a breach we see."

Jesus, undeterred, with truth aflame,
"Why transgress God's law for human fame?
Honor your kin, as God has decreed,
Not for tradition, let hearts take heed."

He spoke of devotion, a misguided twist,
Neglecting parents, a tradition's tryst.
Isaiah's prophecy, a rebuke unveiled,
"Hearts far from me," their sin, unassailed.

To the crowd, he beckoned, words profound,
"Listen and grasp, let understanding abound.
Defilement's not found in what's ingested,

But in words unleashed, by hearts invested."

Disciples confused, as Pharisees fumed,
Jesus spoke of blindness, roots to be exhumed.
"Blind guides," he declared, a warning stark,
Both blind and guided, they stumble in the dark.

Peter sought clarity, the parable untold,
"Explain, Lord, the mysteries that unfold."
Jesus, stern, questioned their sight,
"Don't you see, it's not what enters but takes flight."

Into the stomach, and out it goes,
No defilement in what the mouth bestows.
From the heart's chamber, true evil springs,
Murder, adultery, a torrent of dark things.

"Are you still dull?" Jesus' voice so keen,
"The mouth's an exit, not where defilements glean.
Evil, a product of the heart's vile brew,
Not in unwashed hands, but words untrue."

In this tale of tradition, hearts laid bare,
Jesus' wisdom, a truth rare.
Defilement not in the outward show,
But in the heart's recess, where true evils grow.

THE FAITH OF THE CANAANITE WOMAN

From Tyre to Sidon, Jesus' path was drawn,
A Canaanite woman, her heart forlorn.
"Lord, Son of David, have mercy," she cried,
Demon's grip on her daughter, a tormenting tide.

Silence from Jesus, no words to spare,
Disciples, uneasy, sought to clear the air.
"Send her away," they urged with disdain,
Her relentless cries, a bothersome refrain.

"I am sent to Israel's lost sheep," he declared,
His mission clear, to them repaired.
Undeterred, the woman approached the Lord,
Kneeling before him, her plea outpoured.

"Lord, help me," she pled, in desperation's tone,
Yet, Jesus replied with a harsh undertone.
"The children's bread to dogs is not cast,
A truth you must grasp, in this moment vast."

But the woman, undaunted, wisdom displayed,
"Even dogs feast on crumbs," she conveyed.
Her faith profound, a truth unveiled,
Jesus, astounded, his verdict hailed.

"Woman, your faith, a radiant light,
Your request granted, in this sacred night."
At that very instant, the demon's sway,
Relinquished its hold, and the daughter's pain gave way.

JESUS FEEDS THE FOUR THOUSAND

Along the Galilee's shore, Jesus tread,
To a mountainside, he sought to be led.
A multitude followed, their ailments vast,
Lame, blind, and mute, their hopes steadfast.

At his feet, they laid, their burdens unbound,
Healing bestowed, a divine surround.

The mute spoke, the crippled rose with grace,
The blind beheld, a celestial embrace.

Amazement echoed, the crowd in awe,
Praises to God, a resounding draw.
Jesus, moved with compassion profound,
Three days with him, their hunger unbound.

"I won't send them away," he declared,
Lest hunger and weakness their journey impaired.
Disciples puzzled, a remote expanse,
"Where find bread in this circumstance?"

"How many loaves have you?" Jesus inquired,
"Seven and a few fish," they respired.
On the ground, the multitude seated,
Seven loaves, few fish, their hunger defeated.

In gratitude, Jesus broke the bread,
Fish included, a banquet spread.
Disciples distributed, to the multitude's delight,
All ate their fill, a miraculous sight.

Satisfied, the crowd, abundant in sum,
Seven baskets of fragments, leftover from the sum.
Four thousand men, not counting the rest,
Women and children, divinely blessed.

After the feast, Jesus, content,
Sent the crowd away, their nourishment spent.
In the boat, to Magadan, he set sail,
A chapter closed, in Galilee's tale.

THE DEMAND FOR A SIGN

Pharisees and Sadducees, a skeptical band,
To Jesus approached, their demand well planned.
"Show us a sign from heaven," they inquired,
Testing the waters, their doubt conspired.

Jesus replied, with wisdom profound,
"Red sky at night, fair weather is found.
In the morn, the sky's red and overcast,
Stormy weather, a sign unsurpassed.

"You discern the sky's appearance with might,
Yet fail to grasp signs in plain daylight.
A wicked generation seeks signs grand,
But none, save Jonah's, shall grace this land."

With these words, he left, their request denied,
Departing, Jesus their skepticism defied.
Leaving them to ponder, their doubts set aside,
His departure echoing, truth testified.

THE YEAST OF THE PHARISEES AND SADDUCEES

Across the lake, the disciples sailed, their minds astray,
No bread they brought, a detail missed on this fateful day.
Jesus warned, "Guard against the Pharisees' deceit,
The Sadducees' yeast, a danger, both subtle and discreet."

Among themselves, they whispered of bread they failed to bear,

An earthly concern, but Jesus sensed a greater snare.
"You of little faith," he sighed, their focus he sought,
Not on bread's lack, but teachings, a perilous thought.

"Do you not recall the five loaves for thousands spread?
Or seven for four thousand, with baskets at the thread?"
His words, a puzzle to the twelve, their minds a maze,
Guard against false teachings, the yeast that slyly sways.

Not bread, but wisdom's leaven, a cautionary plea,
Beware the Pharisees' and Sadducees' treachery.
Understanding dawned, a revelation sweet,
Guard against false doctrines, the yeast of false conceit.

PETER DECLARES THAT JESUS IS THE MESSIAH

In Caesarea Philippi, where stories swirl,
Jesus asked, "Who am I in this human world?"
Disciples pondered, tales of prophets old,
John, Elijah, Jeremiah, stories untold.

"But who am I to you?" the Master pressed,
Peter stepped forth, his answer expressed,
"You are the Messiah, the living Son,
The anointed one, God's chosen One."

"Blessed are you, Simon," Jesus proclaimed,
"Not by flesh, but by heaven's light, you're named.
Peter, on this rock, my church I'll raise,
Hades' gates, against it, shall not blaze.

Keys to heaven, to you, I bestow,
Binding on earth, in heaven, it will show.
Loosing on earth, the same shall be,

A decree echoed through eternity."

"Tell none of this," the wise teacher advised,
In mystery shrouded, his true identity lies.
In Caesarea's realm, truth was revealed,
Peter's declaration, a fate forever sealed.

JESUS PREDICTS HIS DEATH

From that time, a shadow o'er his path was cast,
Jesus, foretelling a fate so vast.
To Jerusalem, he must wend,
Suffer, be slain, on the third day, transcend.

Peter, moved by love, his Lord denies,
"Never, Lord!" with fervent cries.
"This fate, it cannot be, not for thee,
Such a destiny, I cannot see."

But Jesus, stern, turns his gaze,
"Get behind, Satan, your voice betrays.
Human concerns cloud your sight,
God's purpose must take its flight."

To disciples, the Master declared,
"A cross you must bear, not to be spared.
Who clings to life, in the end shall lose,
Sacrifice, and salvation, it shall choose.

What gain is the world, in its fleeting grasp,
If the soul, for its worth, does unrelenting clasp?
The Son of Man, in glory's ray,
With angels, in the Father's way.

Each shall reap what they have sown,
Rewards or retributions, clearly known.
Some here shall witness the kingdom's gleam,
Before death's shroud claims its redeem."

THE TRANSFIGURATION

Six days elapsed, and Jesus led
Peter, James, and John, on the mountain's tread.
High and alone, a summit's embrace,
Where heaven meets earth, a sacred space.

Transfigured there, in radiant sheen,
His face aglow, a celestial scene.
Sunlight mirrored in garments white,
A luminous vision, pure and bright.

Lo, Moses and Elijah, ancient kin,
Beside Jesus, a conversation within.
Peter, enthralled, suggests with delight,
Three shelters to build, a gesture so right.

As he spoke, a bright cloud enshrouds,
A voice emerged from heavenly clouds.
"My Son, beloved, in whom I delight,
Listen to him, radiant Light."

Terrified, disciples fell to the ground,
A touch from Jesus, a reassuring sound.
"Arise, fear not," his gentle command,
They looked up, seeing Jesus alone, so grand.

Down the mountain's descent, a solemn descent,
Jesus advised silence, a secret to augment.

Until the Son rises, triumphant and true,
From death's shadow, life anew.

Curious disciples queried with plea,
"Why must Elijah come first, decree?"
Jesus spoke of Elijah's restorative plan,
Yet unrecognized, abused by man.

In the same stride, suffering foretold,
The Son of Man, his destiny, bold.
Disciples grasped the profound feat,
John the Baptist, in the prophecy, complete.

JESUS HEALS A DEMON-POSSESSED BOY

In the midst of the multitude, a desperate plea,
A father, burdened, on bended knee.
"Lord, have mercy on my afflicted son,
Seized by convulsions, suffering undone.

He falls to the flames, into waters deep,
I sought your disciples, but their watch did not keep."
Jesus, sternly, to the crowd declared,
"Unbelieving generation, hearts ensnared.

How long must I linger, endure your doubt?
Bring the afflicted boy, let the demon be cast out."
Before the Son, the boy was laid,
The demon rebuked, its power displayed.

With a word, Jesus sent the torment away,
The boy released from the dark array.
Healed in an instant, suffering ceased,

A miraculous moment, a demon released.

In private, disciples sought to learn,
"Why did our efforts seem to spurn?
The demon resisted, clung to its place,
Defying our power, our spiritual grace."

Jesus answered, "O, you of little faith,
A mustard seed's worth, life's mountain swathe.
Speak, and the mountain shall bow to your will,
Nothing impossible, if faith is instilled."

JESUS PREDICTS HIS DEATH A SECOND TIME

In Galilee's embrace, where the disciples convened,
Jesus spoke of a fate, a destiny preordained.
"The Son of Man," he solemnly foretold,
To the hands of men, his destiny to unfold.

A dark prophecy, shrouded in sorrow,
Of death and resurrection on the morrow.
"Killed," he declared, "by the hands of strife,
But on the third day, to embrace new life."

Grief gripped the disciples, a heavy shroud,
As the weight of prophecy was solemnly avowed.
In Galilee's shadow, destiny unfurled,
A tale of sacrifice, in the hands of the world.

THE TEMPLE TAX

In Capernaum's embrace, where waters gently lave,

Collectors sought the temple tax, a tribute to crave.
To Peter, they inquired, "Does your teacher comply,
Does he, with drachmas, the temple's due supply?"

"Yes," Peter affirmed, as the house's threshold he crossed,
Within, Jesus, the question's essence embossed.
"Simon," he queried, knowledge in his gaze,
"Kings of the earth, from whom do they amass?"

"From others," Peter spoke, his response succinct,
Words echoing in the chambers, the truth succinct.
"Their own children," Jesus proclaimed, "are free,
Exempt from the tribute that others decree."

To avoid offense, in actions discreet,
He beckoned to Peter, a task to complete.
"To the lake," he directed, with purpose unspoken,
"Cast your line, a token shall be awoken."

A piscine messenger, in depths profound,
A four-drachma coin in its mouth was found.
"Take it," said Jesus, "for the tax ordained,
Both mine and yours, in this coin contained."

THE GREATEST IN THE KINGDOM OF HEAVEN

In days of old, disciples gathered near,
Seeking wisdom, a question sincere.
"Who, among us, in heaven's domain,
Shall wear the crown, the highest attain?"

A child, small in stature, to Jesus drew near,
Amid the disciples, innocence clear.
"Change your hearts," he spoke, his words profound,

"Be like these children, in faith be bound.

"Lowly in spirit, with humility's grace,
Enter the kingdom, behold its embrace.
The greatest among you, in heaven's sight,
Embraces the lowly, as children delight.

"Extend your welcome to the small and meek,
In the name of the child, my love to seek.
For in such gestures, my presence you see,
The welcome to them, a welcome to me."

CAUSING TO STUMBLE

In the realm where belief and innocence meet,
A caution profound, a warning replete.
"If any, in their folly, cause these small hearts to stray,
A millstone awaits, in the deep, a dire display.

"Woe unto the world for stumbling blocks untold,
That lead astray the faithful, both young and old.
Through stumbling, woes arise, like a tempest's gust,
Yet greater the woe for the cause, the one who must.

"If a hand or a foot be the source of thy fall,
Severe, cut it off, heed the solemn call.
Better to enter life, maimed and incomplete,
Than with both, face the fires, eternal and fleet.

"Should an eye betray, let it pay the toll,
Gouge it out, let the sacrifice take its toll.
Entering life with one, as the flames grow nigh,
Preferable fate than with two, to hell, to fly."

THE PARABLE OF THE WANDERING SHEEP

In the kingdom divine, where angels gaze,
A tale unfolds, a shepherd's caring ways.
"Despise not the little ones," the Master implores,
For their angels in heaven see divine shores.

Picture a shepherd, a hundred sheep in care,
A wanderer amidst, lost in the mountain's lair.
Does he not leave the ninety-nine behind,
To seek the lost, the errant one to find?

Happier is he when the wanderer's found,
Than the ninety-nine on the rugged ground.
So, in heavenly realms where compassion is vast,
The Father yearns for the little ones to outlast.

In the parable told, a truth we discern,
Divine love, unyielding, for the lost to return.
No little one to perish, the Father's decree,
In the shepherd's quest, the divine decree.

DEALING WITH SIN IN THE CHURCH

In the tapestry of faith, where brethren stand,
A counsel profound, a divine command.
"If your kin transgress in sin's array,
Go, in secret, their missteps to convey.

Between you two, let the words be heard,
Seek their heart, let understanding be stirred.
If they heed your counsel, repentance sown,
Victory claimed, their spirit overthrown.

Yet, if they turn, and silence persists,
Witnesses, then, in the fold subsist.
Two or three, their testimonies blend,
Establish truth, let righteous judgment descend.

Should defiance persist, a stubborn core,
Bring it to the church, let the matter pour.
If even the church finds deafened ear,
Treat them as one estranged, a soul to revere.

Truly I say, the power divine,
Bound in heaven, on earth align.
What you bind and loose in just accord,
Heaven echoes the earthly accord.

In agreement, two voices entwined,
Petitions ascend, by grace assigned.
Two or three gathered in His name,
The Divine, present, in praise or claim."

THE PARABLE OF THE UNMERCIFUL SERVANT

In the realm of forgiveness, a query posed,
Peter inquired, "How often, Lord, supposed,
Should I pardon the sins of kin,
Seven times, my heart within?"

Jesus spoke, "Not seven, but seventy times,
Forgiveness echoes in heavenly chimes.
Now, hear a tale of a king's decree,
A parable profound, let its wisdom be."

A monarch, stern, his accounts unfurled,
Debtors summoned in a financial world.
A servant appeared, burdened and pale,
Ten thousand gold bags, his financial tale.

Unable to pay, his fate grew grim,
His family and all, to repay the whim.
He fell, beseeching on bended knee,
"Patience, my lord, I'll make amends, you'll see."

The master moved, compassion's call,
Canceled the debt, released the thrall.
Yet, that servant, freed from his chain,
Encountered a debtor, his mercy to gain.

A hundred coins owed, a meager sum,
But the servant, wrathful, his heart grew numb.
Choking his fellow, he demanded pay,
No mercy shown in his vengeful display.

The debtor pleaded, on knees he bent,
"Patience, I'll repay," his voice intent.
But mercy denied, the debtor cast away,
In prison confined, in debt's array.

Witnessed by others, the tale unfold,
To the master's ears, the story told.
The king enraged, summoned the cruel one,
"Wicked servant, your forgiveness undone.

I canceled your debt at your earnest plea,
Should you not show mercy, as shown to thee?
To the jailers, in wrath's fierce flame,
Until debts repaid, bear the torment's claim.

So shall my Father, in heaven above,
Deal with each soul, with mercy and love.
Forgive from your heart, let compassion start,
Or face the torment, of an unmerciful heart."

DIVORCE

When Jesus, from Galilee's land, withdrew,
To Judea's realm, where Jordan's waters strew.
A multitude trailed, seeking healing's balm,
In their midst, the Savior, a spiritual calm.

Pharisees, cunning, their intent concealed,
Approached to test, with queries revealed.
"Is it lawful," they inquired, sly,
"To divorce for reasons, any and every why?"

"Have you not read," Jesus countered, keen,
"At the start, when the world was pristine,
The Creator's design, a truth untold,
Made them male and female, a union to hold.

A man leaves his kin, in matrimony's grace,
United with his wife, a one-flesh embrace.
No more twain, but a fusion divine,
What God has conjoined, let no man malign."

"Why, then," they persisted, their challenge deep,
"Did Moses decree, a certificate to keep?
A command to divorce, a legal separation,
What say you, Jesus, in this conversation?"

"Moses, for hardness of heart," he clarified,
"Permitted divorce, when love had died.

Yet, from the genesis, it was not so,
In the Creator's plan, let understanding grow.

To divorce and remarry, save for one cause,
Sexual immorality, breaking love's laws.
Any other union, a marital fraud,
A dance with adultery, a betrayal broad."

The disciples, perplexed, voiced their plea,
"If such be the case, better not to marry, see?"
Jesus responded, a truth profound,
"Not all can embrace this sacred ground.

Some are eunuchs by birthright's hand,
Others by force, their fate withstand.
Yet, some for heaven's sake, alone,
Accept this calling, a path of their own.

Let those who can, in their hearts, receive,
This sacred word, in faith's reprieve.
A vow profound, within the kingdom's weave,
In heaven's tapestry, their destinies interweave.

THE LITTLE CHILDREN AND JESUS

In the realm where sunlight meets the golden air,
A gathering, a moment, the tender and the fair.
Brought forth by hands, with hope and care,
Little ones, innocence beyond compare.

To Jesus, they came, like flowers in the morn,
Seeking blessings, in their hearts, forlorn.
But disciples, stern, did scorn,
Their tender presence, as if a thorn.

"Rebuke them not," the Savior's voice,
A melody of love, a compassionate choice.
"Let children near, in joy rejoice,
For heaven's realm is theirs, a divine voice."

His hands, like a gentle zephyr, laid,
On heads so pure, where dreams are made.
The kingdom's key to youth conveyed,
In innocence, a truth portrayed.

So, from this scene, the Master moved,
Through realms of love, His journey proved.
In children's hearts, a seed He grooved,
A lesson in grace, forever behooved.

THE RICH AND THE KINGDOM OF GOD

In the hallowed glow, a seeker, sincere,
Approached the Teacher, conscience clear.
"Master, what deed to eternity draws near?"
He asked, eyes ablaze, a quest severe.

"Why question me on goodness true?
For only One is pure, the righteous view.
To grasp life's essence, keep commands in view,
From murder's shadow, to love pure and true."

"Which commands?" the seeker inquired,
As Jesus spoke, the moral fire.
"Murder, adultery, falsehood, and theft inquired,
Honor to parents, and your neighbor inspired."

"All these," the youth proclaimed with pride,

"What more is needed?" he testified.
"If perfection beckons," the Teacher replied,
"Renounce your wealth, let love abide."

"Give to the needy, release the gold,
A heavenly treasure, in kindness bold.
Follow me, let earthly ties unfold,
In heaven's courts, your name enrolled."

The youth, dismayed, his riches clung,
To earthly treasure, his heart was strung.
Wealth, a fortress where his hopes were flung,
Yet heaven's call, from his grasp, it swung.

Jesus sighed, his gaze profound,
"Riches, a hurdle, heaven's bound.
Easier for camels, needles found,
Than wealth through heaven's gate to sound."

Disciples, astounded, questioned fate,
"Who then, O Master, can salvation sate?"
"With man, impossible," was Jesus' weight,
"But God transforms, opens the gate."

Peter voiced, "We've left all behind,
For your name, our kin, and wealth confined.
What awaits the faithful, a destiny outlined?"
Jesus proclaimed, "In glory, thrones assigned."

"At the world's rebirth, thrones to share,
Twelve tribes judged, with justice rare.
Houses, kin, and fields left with care,
A hundredfold returned, eternal fare."

"The first may be last, the last first,
In God's realm, where judgments burst.

Sacrifice blessed, in heaven immersed,
A divine inversion, fate reversed."

THE PARABLE OF THE WORKERS IN THE VINEYARD

In the dawn's embrace, a landowner strides,
To his vineyard, where labor abides.
Early morn, he sought hands to hire,
A denarius promised, a wage to inspire.

Into the vineyard, the first were sent,
Agreed to toil, their strength unbent.
At nine, he spied others, idle in the square,
"Work in my vineyard, your due I'll declare."

At noon and thrice, more souls he found,
Standing idle, their fate unwound.
"Work, and I'll pay what's just and fair,"
His call resounded through the air.

Five in the eve, still others remained,
"Why idle here?" the owner explained.
"Go to my vineyard, labor share,"
An invitation, a task to bear.

As dusk unfurls, the day's toil ends,
Wages to be paid, a reckoning commends.
"Begin with the last," the owner declared,
Rewarding all, each justly paired.

Those of the eleventh, with one hour spent,
Received a denarius, their toil's intent.

First hired, they deemed a greater share,
Yet, each was granted an equal share.

Grumbles arose from the early morn,
"Equal pay, though our burdens were borne?
One hour's toil, the sun's scorching scorn,
Made equal to us who the day were sworn."

The owner replied to their discontent,
"Friend, agreed to a denarius, content.
What's mine to give, don't you resent,
Envy not the generosity I've lent."

The last now first, the first now last,
A lesson learned from a day's steadfast.
In the vineyard of grace, future and past,
Generosity prevails, destiny cast.

JESUS PREDICTS HIS DEATH A THIRD TIME

Toward Jerusalem, Jesus led the Twelve,
A solemn journey, mysteries to delve.
He spoke in hushed tones, a prophecy dire,
Of trials and tribulations, a fate entire.

"Jerusalem calls, the Son of Man to face,
Chief priests and scribes in judgment's embrace.
Condemned to death, a cruel decree,
To Gentile hands, from safety, set free."

Mockery and scourge, a fate foretold,
The crucible of pain, a tale to unfold.
On the third dawn, life's triumph proclaimed,
From death's clutches, the Son reclaimed.

A MOTHER'S REQUEST

The mother of Zebedee's sons drew near,
Kneeling, she voiced a request sincere.
"What favor would you seek?" Jesus inquired,
A mother's plea, her heart's desire.

"In your kingdom, let my sons hold sway,
One at your right, the other at the left array."
Jesus, with wisdom, this plea did weigh,
"Can you drink the cup I'll drink someday?"

"We can," they boldly claimed,
Unaware of the path where sorrows are named.
To sit so close, a place ordained,
By the Father's plan, not easily gained.

The news spread wide, ten were aggrieved,
Jealousy and discord, emotions heaved.
Jesus called them, wisdom conceived,
"Servanthood, not rule, is how greatness is achieved.

Gentile rulers seek to dominate,
But in my kingdom, love shall dictate.
To be the first, embrace a lower state,
As the Son of Man, who served and his life did consecrate."

TWO BLINDMEN RECIEVE SIGHT

From Jericho's gates, they set their course,
A crowd in tow, a following force.
Two blind men sat by the roadside,

Hope in their hearts, a plea implied.

"Lord, Son of David, mercy we seek!"
Their voices rose, bold and meek.
The crowd, in disdain, urged them to hush,
Yet louder they cried, their faith a rush.

Jesus, amidst the clamoring crowd,
Heard their call, their voices loud.
He stopped and spoke, "What do you need?"
They pleaded, "Lord, grant us to see indeed."

Compassion swelled in Jesus' gaze,
He touched their eyes, their darkened phase.
Swiftly, the gift of sight bestowed,
Their world transformed, a vibrant abode.

No longer blind, their eyes beheld,
The Son of David, their hearts compelled.
With newfound sight, they chose to trace,
The steps of Jesus, in His grace.

JESUS COMES TO JERUSALEM AS KING

On Olives' mount, near Jerusalem's gate,
Jesus, the King, changed His fate.
To Bethphage, two disciples He sent,
A donkey awaits, by a colt, to be lent.

"Go to the village ahead," He decreed,
"A donkey, a colt, there you shall need.
Untie them both, bring them to Me,
For the Lord's purpose, let them roam free."

Fulfilling prophecy, as it was told,
"Daughter Zion, your King behold!
He comes, gentle, on a donkey's back,
On a colt, a foal, no need to backtrack."

The disciples obeyed, with diligence true,
Bringing the colt and donkey to view.
Cloaks on their backs, for Jesus' seat,
A royal procession down the city street.

Crowds, with joy, their garments spread,
Branches from trees, a carpet to tread.
"Hosanna to the Son of David!" they cried,
"Blessed is He!" the citywide hymn sighed.

"Hosanna in the highest heaven!"
Their voices rose, as their faith was given.
Into Jerusalem, Jesus made His way,
Stirring the city in awe that day.

The people questioned, curiosity stirred,
"Who is this, by the crowd's acclaim spurred?"
"He's Jesus, the prophet from Nazareth's dome,"
The reply echoed, as the city became His home.

JESUS AT THE TEMPLE

Into the temple, Jesus strode,
Where buying and selling freely flowed.
Tables overturned, coins scattered wide,
A declaration against deceit and pride.

"My house, a house of prayer," He cried,
Not a den of robbers, where greed resides.

The blind and lame to Him drew near,
In the temple's courts, devoid of fear.

He healed them there, with a gentle touch,
While children shouted, "Hosanna!" as such.
The Son of David, they joyously proclaimed,
In the temple courts, their voices framed.

Chief priests and scribes, with disdainful mien,
Witnessed the wonders, the spectacle seen.
Indignant hearts, their anger flared,
At children's praise, in the temple aired.

"Do you hear?" they questioned the righteous One,
"Their praises ring, God's will done?"
Jesus replied with wisdom profound,
"From children's lips, true praise is found."

He left the temple, with purpose clear,
To Bethany's rest, drawing near.
In the city's shadow, He spent the night,
A beacon of truth, shining bright.

JESUS CURSES A FIG TREE

In the morning's hush, on the city's verge,
Jesus, hungry, felt an inner urge.
A fig tree stood, adorned with leaves,
Promising fruit, a deceit it conceives.

To the tree, He spoke a stern decree,
"May you bear no fruit, barren be!"
At once, the fig tree began to fade,
Its vitality drained, life's essence betrayed.

The disciples, eyes widened in surprise,
Witnessed the fig tree's swift demise.
"How, Master, did this happen?" they sought,
Amazement and wonder in their thought.

Jesus spoke with wisdom profound,
"Have faith unshaken, in it be bound.
Not just the fig tree, but mountains high,
Can be moved if faith doesn't wane or die.

Believe, and in prayer, all shall be,
Asking, receiving, in faith's decree.
No doubt shall hinder, no obstacle stand,
With faith, you shall hold creation's command."

THE AUTHORITY OF JESUS QUESTIONED

In the temple's hallowed halls, Jesus stood,
Teaching the gathered, a righteous flood.
Chief priests and elders, in robes arrayed,
Approached with questions, authority displayed.

"By what right do you these deeds?" they pressed,
"Whence comes your power, by whom are you blessed?"
Jesus, with calm, His gaze unwavering,
Replied in kind, their query savoring.

"A question for you," He turned the tide,
"John's baptism, from where does it abide?
Heavenly origin or man's decree?
Speak your truth, unravel this mystery."

In whispered counsel, the leaders convened,

Debating the answer, a plot unseen.
"Heaven or man?" their dilemma clear,
Fearful of the crowd, they held John dear.

"We don't know," they declared, in feigned dismay,
An evasive answer, their tactic at play.
To the challenge, Jesus replied with might,
"Then neither shall I reveal my authority's light."

THE PARABLE OF THE TWO SONS

In vineyard's realm, a tale unfolds,
Of two sons, their destinies foretold.
The father, wise, with words sincere,
Called on his kin, his will made clear.

To the first, he spoke, "Son, labor today,
In the vineyard's embrace, your tasks obey."
"I will not," the son, in defiance, cried,
Yet later, remorse would in him abide.

The second, when summoned, a pledge professed,
"I will, sir," he said, his vow addressed.
But in the vineyard's expanse, he found no place,
His words, a veneer, deceit's cold embrace.

To the gathered, Jesus posed the decree,
"Which son obeyed, as his father could see?"
"The first," they replied, the truth laid bare,
The son who recanted, repentance rare.

Jesus proclaimed, "Tax collectors and the meek,
Enter God's kingdom, their souls to seek.
For John, the herald of righteous guide,

You disbelieved, in arrogance hide.

Though witness borne, you chose not to heed,
The tax collectors and sinners took the lead.
Repentance eludes, your hearts entwined,
As God's kingdom dawns, in love, you're blind."

THE PARABLE OF THE TENANTS

In vineyard's realm, a tale profound,
A landowner's legacy, fertile ground.
He walled it high, a fortress grand,
A watchtower rose, a vigilant stand.

To farmers' hands, he leased the earth,
Assigned its toil, its bounteous worth.
When harvest called, its fruits to reap,
He sent his servants, the treasures to keep.

But tenants vile, in greed's cruel spree,
Seized the servants, a savage decree.
They beat, they killed, stones in fury hurled,
Defying the lord, disrupting the world.

Again he sent, more servants forth,
Hopeful hearts, ignorant of worth.
Yet tenants, unmoved by mercy's plea,
Reveling in deeds of dark decree.

Last of all, the heir he sent,
His beloved son, with hope intent.
"He shall be revered," the father believed,
But in wicked hearts, betrayal conceived.

"This heir, the key to riches untold,
Let's seize and slay, his inheritance bold."
Out of the vineyard, the son was cast,
Crushed by ambition, in shadows vast.

Jesus then asked, "What judgment be,
For tenants who mar this legacy?"
"Wretches' fate," the crowd declared,
The vineyard leased, their end prepared.

Jesus spoke of stones, rejected, scorned,
Becoming the cornerstone, in destiny adorned.
A kingdom shifted, a people new,
Who'd bear the fruit, with hearts made true.

To those who stumble on this stone,
A breaking force, their pride overthrown.
And for those on whom it falls with might,
A crushing weight, in judgment's light.

The leaders heard, with hearts inflamed,
In parables, their guilt proclaimed.
A prophet he seemed, the crowd's regard,
Yet fear withheld their judgments hard.

THE PARABLE OF THE WEDDING BANQUET

In regal halls, a tale unfolds,
Of a monarch's feast, of stories told.
The kingdom's realm, a banquet grand,
For the king's own son, a marriage planned.

Servants sent to the honored guests,
Bade them come, to be the blessed.

But spurning the call, they turned away,
To field and business, their hearts did sway.

Again, he sent, with a feast prepared,
Oxen and cattle, a table shared.
Invitations spurned, mistreatment sown,
Servants harmed, their lives overthrown.

The king enraged, in justice stern,
Sent his army, the wicked to discern.
Their city burned, their fate declared,
For murderers' deeds, no pardon spared.

Yet still, the feast, a hall so wide,
The king declared, no one denied.
Go to the streets, the corners vast,
Invite the all, from first to last.

Servants went forth, gathered far and near,
The good and bad, their voices clear.
The banquet hall, a joyous sight,
Filled with guests, in love's pure light.

Yet in this joy, the king's keen gaze,
A man amiss, in a puzzling daze.
No wedding garb adorned his frame,
A silent question, the king proclaimed.

"How came you here, friend, unrobed for the feast?"
The man stood mute, as judgment increased.
Bound and cast to the outer night,
Weeping, gnashing, a dreadful plight.

For many invited, the call was clear,
But chosen few, the robes must wear.

In the kingdom's halls, a lesson learned,
To the chosen few, their robes discerned.

PAYING THE IMPERIAL TAX TO CAESAR

In the realm where questions tangled lay,
Pharisees and Herodians in subtle array.
Their plots concealed, in deceitful guise,
They sought to trap with cunning eyes.

"Teacher of truth, of integrity sound,
You, unmoved by faces that surround.
Tell us, wise sage, with words so deft,
Is it right, Caesar's tax, to be met?"

Jesus, perceiving their motives dark,
Their hidden snares, a deceitful mark,
He spoke with a calm and measured tone,
Unveiling the trap, their malice shown.

"Hypocrites," he declared, with righteous ire,
"Why entangle truth in a web of fire?
Show me the coin used to pay the fee,
Whose image, whose words, what do you see?"

A denarius offered, their silence broke,
"Caesar's," they answered, words bespoke.
Render to him what bears his claim,
To God, the rest, a sacred aim.

Amazement echoed in that moment's hush,
As wisdom flowed, a clear, pure rush.
They departed, vanquished, shadows dismayed,
By truth untangled, their plot displayed.

MARRIAGE AT THE RESURRECTION

In the temple's hallowed, ancient space,
Sadducees with queries did they grace.
Deniers of resurrection's claim,
In cunning words, sought to defame.

"Teacher," said they, in crafty guise,
"By Moses' law, a truth belies.
A widow wed to brothers seven,
At resurrection, whose, a question given."

With voices smooth, in query deep,
They spun a tale, a puzzle steep.
"Seven husbands, now deceased,
In afterlife, whose love's increased?"

Jesus, wise, with gaze profound,
Unraveled the riddle that circled round.
"Error you bear, the Scriptures unknown,
The power of God in mysteries sown.

In resurrection's realm divine,
No weddings bind, no earthly sign.
Like angels soaring in heaven's light,
Such is the state, in eternity's height.

God's words, a beacon in sacred lore,
'I am the God of the living,' He swore.
Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, His claim,
In life, not death, they bear His name."

Astonished crowds, the teaching heard,

In sacred echoes, truth conferred.
The Sadducees silenced, plots undone,
By the wisdom that outshone the sun.

THE GREATEST COMMANDMENT

Silenced Sadducees left in quiet dismay,
Pharisees gathered, plotting the fray.
An expert in law, with cunning intent,
A question he posed, in challenge sent.

"Teacher," he inquired, "in the Law's vast domain,
Which commandment supreme should reign?
Declare with wisdom, reveal the chart,
The greatest command, the core of the art."

In measured response, with words profound,
Jesus, in wisdom, the truth unbound.
"Love the Lord," He declared, a divine decree,
With heart, soul, and mind, in fervent esprit.

This foremost command, in majesty stands,
The pinnacle truth from God's own hands.
Yet intertwined, in a sacred embrace,
The second command, a kindred grace.

"Love your neighbor," He echoed clear,
As self-love's mirror, it draws near.
In these two commands, the Law finds its root,
A golden thread through sacred repute.

"All the Law and the Prophets," He unveiled,
In these twin truths, their essence hailed.
A symphony of love, a heavenly song,

In these commandments, God's will made strong.

WHOSE SON IS THE MESSIAH?

In the solemn halls where Pharisees tread,
Jesus stood, a question to be spread.
"What of the Messiah?" His voice did ring,
"Whose son is he?" The query's wing.

"The son of David," their response so sure,
Confident words, tradition's pure.
But Jesus, in wisdom, His gaze profound,
Unveiling truths, mysteries unbound.

"How then," He queried, "does David declare,
By the Spirit's whisper, a truth so rare?
A Lord to his Lord, in reverence divine,
'Sit at my right hand,' the eternal sign."

A Psalm's refrain, a prophecy told,
In sacred verses, the mystery unfold.
The Pharisees, silenced, no answer to find,
In the presence of wisdom, their thoughts confined.

From that day forth, in hallowed space,
No questions dared, no challenges faced.
For Jesus, in brilliance, the truth made known,
In the dance of words, wisdom's throne

A WARNING AGAINST HYPOCRISY

In the shadow of Moses' ancient seat,
Jesus spoke, His words both sharp and sweet.

To crowds and followers, His voice did soar,
A warning against hypocrisy's door.

"The Pharisees and teachers of the law,
Upon Moses' seat, their influence draw.
Hear their words but mark their deeds,
For heavy burdens on others they impede.

"They tie up loads, oppressive, grand,
Yet lift no finger to lend a hand.
Their deeds for show, a public display,
Phylacteries wide, in the light of day.

"In banquets, they seek the highest place,
In synagogues, the premier space.
Greeted in markets with titles adorned,
'Rabbi,' they cherish, in vanity adorned.

"But you, my disciples, a different way,
In humility's path, your steps shall lay.
No lofty titles, no grand display,
One Teacher, one Father, I say.

"Call no one on earth 'father' with pride,
For one Father in heaven doth preside.
Instructors and titles, lay them down,
The Messiah, your Guide and Crown.

"The greatest among you, in service found,
For those who exalt shall be humbled, bound.
But the humble hearts, in exaltation,
Shall find their place, a divine coronation."

SEVEN WOES ON THE TEACHERS OF THE LAW AND THE PHARISEES

Woe to you, teachers of the law and Pharisees,
Hypocrites, veiled in false sanctities.
The kingdom's door, you shut in faces fair,
Yet enter not, nor let others find it there.

Woe to you, guides, across land and sea,
To win a convert, yet bind in hypocrisy.
Twofold children of hell, your converts become,
Deaf to truth, in your darkness they succumb.

Blind guides, fools who the temple's gold revere,
Greater is the temple, make this truth clear.
Altar and gift, you hold in vain esteem,
For the sacredness lies beyond what it seems.

Swearing by heaven, by God's throne above,
Yet your oaths are empty, devoid of true love.
Woe to you, blind leaders, lost in your pride,
Neglecting justice, mercy, and faithfulness beside.

Tithes of mint, dill, and cumin you pay,
Yet justice, mercy, and faithfulness, you betray.
Straining gnats, while camels you swallow whole,
Your hearts impure, a deception takes its toll.

Outwardly clean, like a cup well-shined,
Inside, greed and self-indulgence entwined.
Blind Pharisee, clean the cup within,
And the outer shall mirror the purity within.

Whitewashed tombs, fair in your display,
Inside, bones of the dead in decay.
Outwardly righteous, within, hypocrisy thrives,
A facade of virtue, while wickedness connives.

Tombs for prophets, homage to the slain,
Yet the blood of prophets on your hands remains.
Claiming innocence, free from ancestral sin,
Yet to the prophets, you are next of kin.

Snakes and vipers, your true nature revealed,
How will you escape the fate you've sealed?
Prophets sent, whom you persecute and kill,
Their blood upon you, a relentless, righteous spill.

Jerusalem, Jerusalem, your stones cast,
Prophets slain, their voices in the past.
Longed to gather, like a hen her brood,
Yet your willful rejection, a desolate mood.

Your house, abandoned, left to desolation,
Until you bless the one in God's delegation.
"Blessed is he who comes in the Lord's name,"
Till then, you'll not see me, nor know my flame.

THE DESTRUCTION OF THE TEMPLE AND SIGNS OF THE END TIMES

Jesus, from the temple, takes his leave,
As disciples marvel, buildings vast they perceive.
“Not a stone on stone,” the prophecy profound,
Every structure shattered, crumbled to the ground.

Upon the Mount of Olives, Jesus sits in view,

Disciples seek the signs, the age's end to construe.
“Deceptions shall arise, claiming my name,
Many led astray, lured by false acclaim.

Wars and rumors, be not distressed,
Birth pains of the age, yet the end's not yet manifest.
Nation 'gainst nation, kingdoms collide,
Famines and earthquakes, the world to chide.

Persecution, death, hatred to ensue,
Faith forsaken, love grown askew.
False prophets rise, deception they weave,
Wickedness ascends, causing hearts to grieve.

Yet stand firm, the faithful, till the end,
Salvation's promise, on this truth depend.
The gospel's testimony, worldwide it shall ring,
Then shall the culmination of all things bring.

The abomination foretold by Daniel's pen,
A warning to all, comprehend, comprehend.
Flee to the mountains, abandon abode,
The desolation's dread, a perilous road.

Dreadful for mothers in those days great,
Flight in winter, or on the Sabbath date.
Unequaled distress, from dawn till dusk,
A calamity unmatched, in history's husk.

Shortened for the chosen, the elect's sake,
Survival's thread, the fabric at stake.
False messiahs with wonders strive,
To deceive even the elect, to connive.

“I have warned you,” Jesus declares,

Against falsehood's snares.
In the wilderness or in hidden rooms,
False claims echo, amidst impending dooms.

As lightning's flash, from east to west,
So shall the Son of Man manifest.
Gathered like vultures to a carcass bare,
The angels trumpet the end's declare.

The sun in darkness, the moon in shade,
Stars fall from the sky, in celestial cascade.
The heavens shaken, a cosmic quake,
Signaling the Son of Man's impending wake.

All peoples mourn, as clouds he rides,
On heavens' chariot, where glory abides.
Angels, with trumpets, herald the hour,
Gathering the elect with heavenly power.

Learn from the fig tree, its tender sign,
Summer's approach, a lesson divine.
When signs align, at the door stands near,
This generation shall witness, have no fear.

Heaven and earth may pass away in grand array,
Yet the words of Christ shall forever stay.
In realms celestial or on earthly clay,
His timeless words endure, an eternal ray.

THE DAY AND HOUR UNKNOWN

In the realm where time unfolds its shroud,
A mystery veiled in the celestial cloud.
No angels, nor the Son, this secret does know,

Only the Father, as the ages ebb and flow.

As in Noah's days, when floods did rise,
People feasted, oblivious to impending skies.
Eating, drinking, in matrimonial delight,
Yet, unaware of the approaching night.

Two toil in fields, destiny's silent decree,
One embraced, the other left to plea.
Women grind with a rhythmic mill,
Fate decides, an unyielding will.

Keep watch, the Lord's return unknown,
Like a thief in the night, swiftly overthrown.
Guard the house, as the wise foretell,
For the Son of Man arrives when shadows swell.

A servant faithful, in the master's stead,
Feeds others, his charge to be led.
Blessed is he, found in duty's keep,
In the master's return, his reward shall reap.

But the wicked servant, deceit in his heart,
Thinks the master's delay a chance to depart.
Indulging in vice, with a cruel hand,
Faces the master's wrath, in a reckoning land.

Cut asunder, assigned with the false and sly,
A dwelling where weeping and gnashing lie.
Thus, the cosmic drama, its chapters unfold,
In the tapestry of time, a tale of silver and gold.

THE PARABLE OF THE TEN VIRGINS

In the kingdom's realm, where tales unfold,
Ten virgins, lamps in hand, a story to be told.
To meet the bridegroom, their steps align,
Five wise, five foolish, destinies entwine.

Lamps flicker in the night's embrace,
Wisdom in some, others lack the grace.
Foolish, no oil their vessels bear,
The wise, prepared with thoughtful care.

The bridegroom lingers, time slips away,
All, in slumber, await the dawn's gray.
At midnight's call, the proclamation sounds,
"Behold the bridegroom!" in the dark resounds.

Virgins rise, lamps they adorn,
Foolish plead, their light is worn.
To the wise, they make their plea,
"Share your oil, extend the key."

"No," the wise reply, "go and buy,
Lest both our lamps in darkness lie."
As foolish seek to oil procure,
The bridegroom comes, the hour sure.

With the ready, the banquet he shares,
The door is sealed, the moment declares.
Later, the foolish in longing arrive,
"Lord, Lord, open! In Your grace, we strive."

But he declares with a solemn tone,
"I know you not, you stand alone."
Watch, therefore, in the silent night,
For the unknown hour takes its flight.

THE PARABLE OF THE BAGS OF GOLD

In a tale of wealth, a journey's decree,
A master's gold, a trust to oversee.
To servants three, his fortune divide,
Each to his skill, a portion to confide.

Five bags of gold to one's capable hand,
Two to another, by the master's command.
Yet one received, a solitary share,
His heart gripped by a paralyzing snare.

The journey embarked, the master away,
The entrusted gold in their care to stay.
Swiftly the five, with vigor untold,
Invested the gold, five more to hold.

Two, diligent and faithful, in measure,
Doubled their portion, a wealth to treasure.
But the one, with fear profound,
Buried the gold in the cold, hard ground.

After the passage of time's vast tide,
The master returned, the servants to guide.
With accounts to settle, a reckoning due,
Each servant's fate in the balance drew.

Five bags presented, the diligent's gain,
"Good and faithful," echoed the refrain.
In charge of much, a joy to share,
His master's delight, a crown to wear.

Two bags multiplied, a faithful feat,
Welcomed by words, the master's greet.

"Faithful servant," the master extolled,
Joyous reward for the trust he'd hold.

But one, with excuses, fear as his plea,
Accused the master of tyranny.
A single bag, in the earth, concealed,
No venture, no gain, his fate was sealed.

"Wicked and lazy," the master's disdain,
To the faithful, reward; to the fearful, pain.
From the unfaithful, the gold was taken,
Given to the diligent, a fate unshaken.

For abundance to those with abundance is given,
But from the lacking, even the little is riven.
To darkness cast, where sorrows amass,
Weeping and gnashing, a fate, alas.

THE SHEEP AND THE GOATS

In glory's dawn, the Son of Man appears,
With angels, a heavenly host that nears.
Upon a throne, resplendent and bright,
He gathers nations in his sovereign sight.

As a shepherd tends to his flock's divide,
Separating sheep and goats, far and wide.
To the right, the sheep in blessing stand,
To the left, the goats, fate close at hand.

The King declares to those on the right,
"Blessed, inherit the kingdom's light.
Prepared since creation's primal birth,
For deeds of kindness done on earth.

"When hungry, you fed me, thirsty, a drink,
A stranger, you welcomed, what others might think.
Clothed in compassion, in sickness, by my side,
In prison's darkness, your love applied."

Perplexed, the righteous in humble voice,
"Lord, when did we make your heart rejoice?
In these acts of mercy, unknowingly,
When did we serve you, unknowingly?"

The King replies, "In the least you've done,
For them, my brethren, for each and every one,
For in their plight, you touched my grace,
Whatever you did, for me you embrace."

To those on the left, a solemn decree,
"Depart, cursed ones, to eternity.
Into the fire, with the devil's kin,
For deeds undone, for the state you're in.

"When hungry, you denied me, no bread,
No drink when thirsty, a stranger unfed.
No clothes when needed, in sickness and chain,
In prison's shadow, you showed disdain."

Puzzled, the goats inquiring seek,
"Lord, when did we your mercy not speak?
In hunger, thirst, a stranger's face,
When did we scorn you, in any case?"

The King rebukes, "In the least ignored,
For each act of mercy, you abhorred.
Whatever not done for these, you see,
Neglected for them, you neglected me."

Eternal paths diverge in fate's decree,
One to life's dawn, one to the endless sea.
The righteous to life, a celestial quest,
The cursed to darkness, a fate unblessed.

THE PLOT AGAINST JESUS

As shadows fall on the approaching eve,
In solemn tone, the Lord began to weave.
"Two days," he spoke, "the Passover nigh,
The Son of Man, to crucifixion, shall comply."

Chief priests and elders, in secret array,
Gathered in the palace, where Caiaphas held sway.
A clandestine plot, their hearts did fill,
To seize Christ covertly, with murderous will.

Whispers in the chamber, a sinister design,
To apprehend the Savior, in shadows entwine.
"No festival hour," their caution did rise,
Lest the people, in uproar, their wrath surmise.

JESUS ANNOINTED AT BETHANY

In a Bethany abode, where shadows play,
Simon the Leper in dwelling lay.
A woman approached, alabaster in hand,
Expensive perfume, a treasure so grand.

Upon his head, as reclined with grace,
She poured the fragrance, a sacred embrace.
Disciples indignant, in voices raised,

"Why this waste?" their question blazed.

"This perfume's value could aid the poor,
Sold at a high price, relief to assure."
Jesus, perceiving their discontent,
Spoke in defense, a message sent.

"Why disturb this woman's noble deed?
A beautiful act, in her love, we read.
The poor, perennial in their need,
Yet, not always with me shall you feed.

For my burial, this perfume she chose,
A prescient anointing, as the story goes.
In every corner, where the gospel flies,
Her deed in memory, a sacred prize."

JUDAS AGREES TO BETRAY JESUS

In shadows' cloak, where deceit takes root,
Judas, a figure with treachery acute.
Among the Twelve, a serpent's guise,
To the chief priests, his intent implies.

"What offer, then, for this betrayal dire?
To deliver Him to your vengeful fire?"
Thirty pieces, silver's gleaming worth,
A pact of betrayal, sealed henceforth.

Judas, the watcher in the dim-lit night,
Seeking the moment, shrouded in spite.
His heart aligned with deceit's cruel song,
Betrayal's dance, a sequence long.

THE LAST SUPPER

In the shadowed eve of Unleavened Bread's embrace,
The disciples sought the appointed place.
"Prepare the Passover," the Teacher did command,
A certain man's house, by divine demand.

As twilight draped the room, the Twelve reclined,
Around the table, destinies entwined.
A heavy truth hung in the sacred air,
One among them would the Master snare.

"Who, Lord, could such betrayal devise?"
In sorrow, they questioned, fear in their eyes.
"One among you, with me shall partake,
A friend's false vow, a bond to break."

Judas, his conscience veiled, inquired,
"Surely not I?" with innocence inspired.
But Jesus, seeing the darkness near,
Revealed the traitor, his voice clear.

"The hand that shares this common bowl,
Shall yield me to the darkened soul.
As written, the Son of Man must go,
Yet woe to the one who deals this blow."

Judas, veiled in feigned surprise,
"Rabbi, is it I?" with deceptive guise.
"You have said," the Teacher's reply,
The moment sealed, no more deny.

Amidst the meal, a sacrament profound,
Bread broken, shared, in mystic surround.

"My body," He said, with thanksgiving's art,
Passed among them, a sacred part.

A cup then lifted, a covenant divine,
"My blood, a seal, for sins' design.
Poured for many, forgiveness' plea,
A pledge unbroken, eternally."

The hymn ascended, a solemn psalm,
They departed to the Mount of Olives' calm.
A night where shadows longed to stay,
As destiny unfolded on the sacred way.

JESUS PREDICTS PETER'S DENIAL

In the gathering shadows, foreboding and deep,
Jesus spoke of a promise, a secret to keep.
"This very night, my companions so dear,
Scattered you'll be, in dread and fear.

As the shepherd struck, the flock shall disband,
A fate woven, by destiny's hand.
But hear, after rising, to Galilee I'll go,
Ahead of you, my presence to show."

Peter, staunch and bold, declared with might,
"Though others stumble, I'll stand in the fight.
Even if, on this perilous night,
They falter and flee from the Shepherd's sight.

I'll cling to you, my Lord, unwavering and true,
A pledge unbroken, my loyalty to you."
Jesus, with sorrow, met Peter's gaze,
"Before dawn's chorus, your loyalty sways.

Thrice, ere the rooster heralds the morn,
You'll deny me, a truth to be borne."
Yet Peter, defiant, with courage infused,
"Even in death, your name I'll choose.

No denial from my lips shall part,
Even if death claims my heart."
Disciples echoed, their voices the same,
A chorus of loyalty, a fervent claim.

But in the tapestry of fate, the threads unseen,
The night unfolded, a tragic scene.
For when shadows yielded to morning's light,
Denial echoed, in the still, predawn night.

GETHSEMANE

To Gethsemane, a somber retreat,
Jesus led, his burden to meet.
"Stay here," he bade his disciples, three,
While he sought solace in fervent plea.

With Peter and sons of Zebedee,
He ventured forth, weighed by agony.
Sorrow and trouble his soul did assail,
"My Father," he prayed, as tears began to trail.

"My soul, in sorrow, nears its death,
Grant reprieve, spare me this breath.
Yet not my will, but yours be done,
In the cosmic dance, the Father and Son."

He knelt in prayer, face to the earth,

A plea for mercy, a sacred rebirth.
His disciples, entrusted to keep the watch,
In weariness succumbed to a drowsy clutch.

Returning, he found them in slumber's embrace,
"Could you not watch for even a brief space?"
"Watch and pray," to Peter, he implored,
"The spirit is willing, the flesh easily floored."

Again, to the garden, his steps retraced,
A desperate plea, the cup not displaced.
"If I must drink, as your will decrees,
Grant me strength, dispel the unease."

Yet on his return, his followers slept,
In the hush of night, secrets were kept.
A third time he prayed, the same refrain,
A divine surrender, a cup of pain.

"Awake, my disciples, the hour draws near,
The Son of Man, to sinners, is clear.
Rise, let us go, my betrayer is here,
The path to redemption, veiled in fear."

JESUS IS ARRESTED

While words hung in the midnight air,
Judas, the betrayer, with a heart laid bare,
Arrived with a multitude, swords in hand,
Sent by priests and elders, a dark command.

A signal arranged, a treacherous kiss,
Judas betrayed with a serpent's hiss.
"Greetings, Rabbi!" he falsely exclaimed,

The kiss, a cloak for the guilt unclaimed.

"Do what you came for, friend," Christ spoke,
A divine surrender, a fate bespoke.
The crowd, with malice, closed their net,
Seizing Jesus, in that moment, beset.

A companion of Christ, zealous and bold,
Drew his sword, a story to unfold.
Striking the servant of the priestly hall,
In the chaos of betrayal, his ear did fall.

"Put your sword away," Jesus sternly cried,
"Those who live by it, by it abide.
More than twelve legions, my Father would send,
Yet, the course ordained, to its end."

"Do you think I lead a rebel's charade,
That with swords and clubs, you invade?
Daily in the temple, I taught without strife,
Why seize me now, disrupt my life?"

"This fulfills the prophets' ancient word,
The path ordained, by heaven heard."
The disciples, in terror, their loyalty shed,
Deserted their Lord, in the shadows they fled.

JESUS BEFORE THE SANHEDRIN

To Caiaphas, they led the bound,
Where the high priest and elders, their judgment found.
Peter, a shadow in the courtyard's gloom,
Watched the trial unfold, impending doom.

False witnesses, in a twisted charade,
Sought to condemn, with lies arrayed.
“This temple's destruction, his boastful claim,”
Two testified, trying to defame.

The high priest rose, his inquiry stern,
“Why don't you answer, what's your concern?”
Silent, Jesus faced the accusing crowd,
In divine composure, unbowed.

“I charge you by God, the living one,
Are you Messiah, God's own Son?”
“You say I am,” Jesus declared,
“From now, the Son of Man is to be shared.

Seated by the Mighty, in heaven's embrace,
Coming on clouds, the image of grace.”
The high priest, enraged, tore his attire,
“Blasphemy!” he roared, fueling the fire.

“Death,” they cried, their judgment harsh,
Spitting, striking, in their violence harsh.
“Prophesy, Messiah, reveal your seer,”
Mocking, they jeered, in the dark theater.

PETER DENIES JESUS

In the courtyard's dimly lit space,
Peter sat, a troubled trace.
A servant girl drew near, her gaze,
"You, with Jesus!" Her words ablaze.

Denial swift, a vehement disown,
"I know not Him," in a resolute tone.

To the gateway, Peter sought escape,
Another accusation, draped in red tape.

"This man, with Jesus, I'm sure," she cried,
Again, denial, oaths implied.
The crowd persisted, his accent revealed,
Accusations mounting, his fate sealed.

Curses and oaths, vehemently sworn,
"I know not the man!" the night, forlorn.
A rooster's call, a sound profound,
Echoed truth, in silence crowned.

Memory struck, Jesus' words clear,
"Thrice denied, in shame and fear."
Peter, burdened, the weight he bore,
Outside he wept, bitter, sore.

JUDAS HANGS HIMSELF

In the morning's hush, dark plots unfold,
Chief priests and elders, secrets told.
A binding grip, Jesus confined,
To Pilate, the governor, they consigned.

Judas, gripped by remorse profound,
Thirty silver pieces, guilt unbound.
To the elders, he returned the gain,
Innocent blood, a stain, a bane.

"I have sinned," his mournful cry,
Innocence betrayed, a wretched sigh.
"That's your concern," they callously said,
Responsibility on Judas spread.

Silver cast in the temple's hall,
A symbol of guilt, a haunting thrall.
Judas, burdened, life he rends,
On a tree, his story ends.

The priests, the coins with disdain,
Blood money, tainted, a mark of Cain.
A field they buy, a burial space,
For strangers, an eerie resting place.

Jeremiah's words, a prophecy fulfilled,
Thirty silver pieces, the potter's field.
A tale of betrayal, silver, and blood,
In the Field of Blood, the earth's dark flood.

JESUS BEFORE PILATE

Before the governor, in solemn guise,
Jesus stood, where justice lies.
"Are you the king of the Jews?" inquired,
Pilate's query, truth required.

"You have said so," Jesus, calm, replied,
In silence, accusations implied.
Chief priests accused, a clamor grew,
But Jesus, silent, strength he drew.

Pilate pressed, "Don't you hear the cry?
The testimony they bring, oh, why?"
Jesus, silent, no defense,
Pilate, amazed, in suspense.

Festival custom, a choice to make,

A prisoner to release, the crowd to wake.
Jesus Barabbas, known by name,
And Christ, the Messiah, in Pilate's claim.

Pilate's wife, a dream distressed,
A warning sent, in fear confessed.
Innocent, she urged, in her plea,
"Don't harm that man, let him be free."

Priests and elders, whispers sly,
Persuaded the crowd, emotions high.
Barabbas, they cried, in loud accord,
Release the criminal, punish the Lord.

Pilate questioned, a choice to face,
"What shall I do with Jesus' case?"
"Crucify him!" the crowd exclaimed,
Their fervor, Pilate's doubt inflamed.

"Why? What crime?" Pilate pled,
But louder still, "Crucify!" they said.
In despair, Pilate washed his hands,
Innocence gone, the crowd demands.

"I'm innocent," Pilate proclaimed,
As water flowed, his guilt disclaimed.
"His blood be on us," the people cried,
A solemn pact, in pain implied.

Barabbas released, a guilty one,
While Jesus, flogged, his trials begun.
To crucifixion, he was led,
A path of thorns, where fate is bred.

THE SOLDIERS MOCK JESUS

Into the Praetorium, the soldiers bore,
Jesus, the King, whom they'd abhor.
A scarlet robe, his frame did drape,
A crown of thorns, a cruel jape.

Twisted, they placed upon his head,
A symbol of the pain they spread.
A staff in hand, a mock salute,
Kneeling, derision, cruel and brute.

"Hail, king of the Jews!" their taunt,
Spit and blows, a vile affront.
The staff, a scepter in disdain,
On his sacred brow, inflicting pain.

Again and again, the blows resound,
A mockery of a king so crowned.
In scarlet robe, a regal guise,
They feigned homage with deceitful eyes.

The cruel jest, the thorns that bind,
A cruel fate for the mocked, maligned.
The soldiers, in their heartless play,
Unleashed their scorn in a wicked display.

His own clothes returned, a fleeting grace,
Then led away to a somber place.
To crucify him, the path unfurls,
A tale of thorns, in sorrow swirls.

THE CRUCIFIXION OF JESUS

Through the somber streets of Jerusalem's might,
A procession of anguish, an impending night.
In the gathering shadows, where sorrow was spun,
A man from Cyrene, by fate, begun.

Simon, his name etched in destiny's decree,
Bore the cross of anguish, heavy as the sea.
Forced to carry the weight of sin's disdain,
As Golgotha's hill awaited the Lamb's bane.

Golgotha, the place of the skull's dire stare,
Where the crucible of fate lay heavy in the air.
Upon that crest, they offered a bitter brew,
Wine mixed with gall, a cup of rue.

Yet, the Savior, noble in his might,
Tasted the cup but refused its bitter bite.
In the face of suffering, a resolute decree,
He would drink no bitterness, for all to see.

They hammered nails through flesh and bone,
A symphony of pain, a mournful tone.
His clothes divided by the cruel hands of chance,
Lots cast, a callous and indifferent dance.

Upon the hill, 'neath a sky of gray,
They sat as guardians in a grim display.
A vigil kept over the King of the Jews,
A title inscribed, an accusation to accuse.

Above his head, a written charge unfurled,
Inscribed in judgment for all the world.

"This is Jesus," the proclamation proclaimed,
The King of the Jews, in agony, named.

Thus, the epic tale unfolds with dread,
A crucifixion on Golgotha's head.
A man named Simon, burdened with strife,
Carried the cross that held eternal life.

Upon the cross, two rebels hung in plight,
One on the right, and one on the left, in the fading light.
As insults hurled like arrows, a venomous brew,
The mocking masses, their disdain they threw.

"Destroy the temple and raise it anew,
Save yourself, O Son of God, if your claim is true!"
Shaking heads in derision, a taunting plea,
To descend from the cross, and thus be free.

Chief priests and scribes, in scornful array,
With elders joined in the cruel affray.
"He saved others," they sneered, their voices cold,
"But himself he can't save, so the story is told."

"He's the king of Israel, they say with a jest,
Let him descend, and we'll believe in the rest.
Trusts in God, let God save him now,
For he claims to be the Son, with a sacred vow."

The rebels, too, in their anguish and pain,
Joined the chorus of insults, a bitter refrain.
In the shadow of Golgotha, where the crosses stood tall,
Mockery echoed, a somber, haunting call.

Yet, amid the jeers and the bitter jest,
The Savior endured, in his silence, he blessed.

For the road to redemption, the path of sacrifice,
Echoed with insults, a poignant, bitter vice.

As the world below shook with disdain,
The Son of God endured, in silence and pain.
A tableau of suffering on the hill's rugged span,
A moment in time, as part of a divine plan.

THE DEATH OF JESUS

From noon till three, a shadow vast,
Darkness draped the land, a somber contrast.
A celestial veil, the sun's bright shroud,
Cloaked the earth in a foreboding cloud.

In the hush of the darkened midday,
A cry echoed forth, in anguish to say,
"Eli, Eli," a plea, a desolate prayer,
"My God, why have you left me in despair?"

Among the gathered, confusion stirred,
Some thought Elijah's name they'd heard.
"He calls for Elijah," they whispered low,
A moment of doubt in the shadow's glow.

Swiftly, a runner in the dimness moved,
A sponge filled with vinegar, a gesture proved.
Extended on a staff, the bitter draught,
To the lips of Jesus, suffering and fraught.

But others said, "Leave him be, let him rest,
See if Elijah comes to his bequest."
A murmur of doubt, a skeptical jest,
As the Savior's cry echoed, his spirit put to the test.

Again, in a loud voice, the heavens did hear,
A final cry, as the end drew near.
With a surrender profound, the Lamb gave his breath,
A moment eternal, transcending life and death.

At that moment, the temple's curtain, sacred and grand,
Torn asunder from top to bottom, by an unseen hand.
The earth trembled, rocks in tumultuous strife,
Split asunder, a tumultuous dance of life.

Tombs, veiled in shadows, their silence broke,
As the ground quivered, an ancient spell bespoke.
The bodies of the holy, in death's repose,
Stirred to life, in a resurrection's throes.

Emerging from tombs, in spectral array,
A host of the righteous, in the light of day.
Not in the moment, as the earth did quake,
But after Jesus' resurrection, life they would partake.

Into the holy city, they made their stride,
A miraculous sight, no longer to hide.
Witnessed by many, in awe they stood,
As the risen saints proclaimed a life renewed.

A tableau divine, in the epic's scope,
The temple's veil torn, offering hope.
The earth and heavens in a sacred chore,
As life triumphed on resurrection's shore.
As the earth convulsed and heavens wept,
Centurion and guard, in vigil, kept.
Witnesses to quaking land and skies,
A spectacle profound, before their eyes.

Terrified hearts in the soldiers' breast,
A trembling realization, a truth confessed.
For in the earthquake's tumultuous roar,
They proclaimed, "This is the Son, whom we adore!"

A declaration, resounding and clear,
Echoing through the realms, both far and near.
The centurion, once stern in war's employ,
Now bowed before divinity, overwhelmed with joy.

In awe they stood, their fears laid bare,
For in that moment, a revelation rare.
Surely, he was the Son of God, they declared,
A truth profound, in the quivering air.

Amidst the shadows, in the distance's gaze,
Stood women, steadfast, in a mournful daze.
From Galilee's embrace, their journey's trace,
To tend to his needs, with a loving grace.

Mary Magdalene, with devotion deep,
Her watchful eyes in sorrow steeped.
Mary, the mother of James and Joseph, near,
In silent vigil, hiding no tear.

The mother of Zebedee's sons, in grief arrayed,
A witness to the scene, the price to be paid.
A trio of women, in the shadows they weep,
Silent witnesses to the sorrow so deep.

In the tapestry of time, their figures etched,
A poignant presence, sorrow fetched.
From Galilee's shores to the crucible's brink,
They watched, they waited, in sorrow to drink.

THE BURIAL OF JESUS

As evening's shadow cast its somber cloak,
A rich man from Arimathea, bespoke,
Joseph by name, disciple in devotion,
Approached Pilate with a humble notion.

To Pilate, he went, a plea sincere,
For Jesus' body, a request austere.
Pilate, yielding to this earnest plea,
Granted Joseph the sacred task to be.

With reverence profound, Joseph took the frame,
Wrapped in linen clean, a shroud to claim.
In his own new tomb, hewn from the rock,
A sanctuary for the Savior's final dock.

A boulder vast, against the entrance rolled,
Guarding the sacred in its silent fold.
Joseph, departing from the burial ground,
Left the tomb sealed, in solitude profound.

Mary Magdalene and her companion Mary,
Sat in vigil, in the twilight's eerie airy.
Opposite the tomb, in mourning's embrace,
They lingered there, a silent witness of grace.

THE GUARD AT THE TOMB

Upon the morrow, after Preparation's sun,
Chief priests and Pharisees, their scheme begun.
To Pilate's judgment hall, with intent they trod,
A request veiled in fear, a plea to the Lord.

"Sir," they spoke, with trepidation's breath,
"We recall the deceiver's claim, in life and death.
After three days, he vowed to rise,
A proclamation bold, now their fear belies."

"Secure the tomb," they urged, with anxious plea,
"Lest disciples thieve the body, deceit set free.
Claiming resurrection, a tale untrue,
A deception surpassing what they already knew."

Pilate, yielding to their clamorous fears,
Granted their wish, as suspicion veered.
"Take a guard," he spoke with a stern command,
"Make the tomb secure, as the law demands."

To the sepulcher they marched, a legion's stride,
A seal on the stone, in caution applied.
A guard posted, vigilant and keen,
To protect the tomb, the scene unseen.

Thus, the tomb enshrouded in a guarded night,
A seal on the stone, against deceit's blight.
Pharisees and soldiers, in watchful stance,
Preserving a silence, fate in their hands.

JESUS HAS RISEN

After the Sabbath rest had ceased,
Mary Magdalene, with the other, the feast
Of dawn's first light, they sought the tomb,
Where lay the Savior in quiet gloom.

A quake, a tremor, the earth did shake,

An angel, radiant, from heaven did make
A descent, to the tomb he came,
Rolled the stone away, a celestial flame.

His visage, lightning, his raiment snow,
Struck fear in the guards, laid low,
Shaking like the dead, pale as the night,
Before the angel, in radiant light.

"Fear not," the heavenly being spoke,
"To Jesus' tomb, you women folk,
Seek ye the crucified, the risen one,
Come, witness where the Lord has gone."

"He is not here, as he declared,
From death's grip, he has fared.
Go swiftly, tell his disciples dear,
In Galilee, the risen Lord draws near."

The women, fear and joy entwined,
Ran with haste, their hearts refined.
To disciples, the tale they bore,
Of an empty tomb and something more.

Lo, Jesus met them on the way,
"Greetings," he spoke in the dawn's array.
They, in reverence, clasped his feet,
A risen Savior, death's defeat.

"Fear not," he said, his voice sublime,
"Go to Galilee, announce the time.
Tell my brothers, let them see,
The risen Lord, who sets them free."

THE GUARD'S REPORT

As the women trod the path away,
Some guards hastened, their tale to convey.
Into the city, their report to unfold,
To chief priests, the happenings bold.

In council convened, the elders and priests,
A plan devised, a scheme unleashed.
A sum of silver, a sizable weight,
To soldiers proffered, a deceitful bait.

"You slept," they instructed, "through night's dark,
His followers came, left a void, a mark.
Spread the tale, a theft in the night,
If the governor hears, we'll set it right."

Money changed hands, the soldiers agreed,
To the narrative false, they would accede.
A fabricated tale, a cover was spun,
Deception's web, a tale begun.

Widely circulated, the story did sway,
Among the Jews, to this very day.
A falsehood sown, a fiction born,
To veil the truth, in shadows worn.

THE GREAT COMMISSION

To Galilee's mount, the disciples ascend,
As Jesus, their Master, to them did send.
Eleven in number, their eyes met the sight,
His presence revealed, in heavenly light.

They worshiped, yet doubters in their midst,
In awe of the one whom death did resist.
Then Jesus approached, with authority grand,
Proclaiming dominion, o'er sea and on land.

"All authority given, in heaven's domain,
On earth, in the heavens, where angels reign.
Go forth now, disciples, to nations unknown,
Baptize in triune name, make my truth known.

Teach them to follow, each command I bestow,
To heed every word, in wisdom to grow.
I am with you always, till the age's last page,
Invisible presence, from youth to gray age.

JESUS APPEARS TO THOMAS

In the chamber sealed, disciples gathered tight,
Thomas, absent, missed the wondrous sight.
"We've seen the Lord," the brethren declared,
But doubt consumed him, disbelief ensnared.

"Unless I touch where nails did pierce His flesh,
My finger probing where the wounds enmesh,
My hand upon His side, I won't believe,
In resurrection's truth, I find reprieve."

A week elapsed, the room again confined,
Locked doors, yet Jesus entered unconfined.
"Peace be with you," his greeting, calm and clear,
In their midst, dispelling doubt and fear.

To Thomas, Jesus turned with loving gaze,

"Behold, my hands, the marks of death's cruel maze.
Extend your hand, my side beneath your palm,
Cease doubting, Thomas, let belief becalm."

Thomas, moved, exclaimed with faith profound,
"My Lord and God!" in awe, his voice resound.
To him, the Savior spoke with grace untold,
"Blessed are those who believe, yet sights withhold."

JESUS AND THE MIRACULOUS CATCH OF FISH

By Galilee's tranquil, shimmering tide,
Disciples in a boat did there abide.
Peter, Thomas, Nathanael true,
Sons of Zebedee, and a chosen few.

"I'll fish," declared Peter, his heart intent,
His comrades echoed, to the waters they went.
Through the night, their toil, a futile venture,
Empty nets, despair they could not censure.

At dawn, a figure on the shore took stand,
Unseen by disciples upon the strand.
"Friends, have you caught a single fish?" he cried,
"No," they responded, their success denied.

"Cast your net to the right," the voice rang out,
A miraculous directive, removing doubt.
Into the waters, the net they threw,
A bounty of fish, a miraculous view.

The disciple whom Jesus loved cried clear,
"It is the Lord!" The truth did he revere.
Peter, swift and ardent, clad in outer gear,

Plunged into the waves, undeterred, no fear.

Others trailed in a boat with the laden net,
Toward the shore, their vessel set.
A hundred yards from land, they came,
To burning coals and a welcoming flame.

On the seashore, Christ, their Lord, did wait,
A feast prepared, bread, and fish of fate.
"Bring your catch," the Savior bade,
153 fish, a net unfrayed.

"Come, breakfast with me," Jesus, kind, implored,
His disciples knew Him, their risen Lord.
They partook of bread, shared in the fare,
This third appearance, beyond death's snare.

JESUS REINSTATES PETER

When supper's feast had reached its sweet end,
Jesus turned to Peter, his loyal friend.
"Simon, son of John, in truth declare,
Is your love for me beyond compare?"

Peter, humbled, answered, "Yes, my Lord,
You know my love, its depth explored."
"Then tend my lambs," the Savior spoke,
In Peter's heart, the words awoke.

Again, the question, a love profound,
"Simon, son of John, let it resound,
Do you love me?" Thrice the plea,
Echoing across the silent sea.

"Lord, you know," Peter, saddened, sighed,
His love for Jesus couldn't hide.
"Feed my sheep," the Shepherd bade,
A sacred trust on Peter laid.

Yet a prophecy, veiled, in words revealed,
"You dressed alone, your fate concealed.
When age descends, another's hand,
Will guide your steps to an unknown land."

Peter, pondering the mystic fate,
His heart stirred, his soul agitate.
"Follow me," the Master's decree,
A path of glory, a destiny.

As they walked, Peter turned to see,
The disciple loved, close as could be.
"What of him?" Peter's query rang,
In the Savior's answer, wisdom sprang.

"What is that to you? Follow me,
In your own journey, let him be free.
Rumors swirled of a fate unknown,
Yet the truth in Jesus' words was sown.

These disciples, witnesses true,
Wrote the tales that the world ne'er knew.
Of deeds untold, in volumes vast,
Too numerous for the world to amass.

THE ASCENSION OF JESUS

Upon the slopes of Bethany's embrace,
The Savior led them to an open space.

His hands, like wings, to heaven ascend,
A benediction on his followers descend.

In the act of blessing, a celestial scene,
He left them, borne on clouds serene.
Upward, into the boundless sky,
To realms unseen, beyond mortal eye.

With faces upturned, they worshipped there,
Witnessing a moment beyond compare.
Back to Jerusalem, joyous they tread,
Hearts ablaze, where divine light led.

Continual in the temple, their voices raise,
Praising God in harmonious hymns and lays.
The echo of ascension, in their hearts, reside,
A tale of glory, where earth and heaven coincide.

THE END

AFTERWORD

Dear Reader,

As we reach the culmination of this poetic journey, I stand with gratitude and awe, having embarked on an exploration of the divine tapestry woven through the life of Jesus Christ. "CROWNED IN VERSE: A CHRISTIC EPIC" has been an odyssey, a labor of love, and a sacred endeavor to encapsulate the essence of our Savior's profound existence in the artistry of language.

In these verses, we've traced the footsteps of Jesus, from the manger's humble cradle to the triumphant ascension, each line a testament to the eternal impact of His teachings, miracles, and the ultimate sacrifice that graced humanity with redemption. I've endeavored to breathe life into the Gospel, presenting a vibrant tableau where the sacred and the human converge in a harmonious dance.

For those who find themselves newly acquainted with the story of Jesus, may these verses be a whispered invitation to delve deeper into the wellspring of faith. It is my fervent hope that these words resonate with your spirit, igniting a flame that draws you closer to the divine presence that has been waiting patiently for your acknowledgment.

To the seasoned pilgrims of faith, may this poetic rendering be a refreshing stream, quenching the thirst of a soul familiar with the Gospel's terrain. May it offer a renewed perspective, a lyrical lens through which to view the timeless narrative you hold dear.

And to the wandering hearts, the seekers, and the weary travelers who stumble upon these verses, I extend an invitation to consider the profound love that inspired this tale. In the midst of life's tumultuous seas, may you find an anchor in the enduring grace that permeates every word.

As we part ways, remember that the story of Jesus is not confined to the pages of a book but is a living, breathing testament that continues to unfold in the hearts of those who dare to seek, believe, and embrace the transformative power of divine love.

May the verses you've encountered here linger in your thoughts, stir your emotions, and kindle a flame within your soul. May they be a celestial melody, echoing in the chambers of your heart, inviting you to dance with the divine.

In the sacred tapestry of existence, may you find your thread, intricately woven into the grand design of love, grace, and redemption. As you close this book, know that the story of Jesus, now crowned in verse, is not merely a tale of antiquity but a timeless anthem that resonates in the eternal corridors of your soul.

With grace and peace,

Jeff Callaway
November 12, 2023

Jeff Callaway, a native Texan, is a prolific writer renowned for his compelling storytelling and captivating poetry. With an extensive repertoire of published works, including six chapbooks and two full-length volumes of poems, he has established himself as a distinguished literary voice. From his early beginnings performing at open mic events to his notable art exhibition at the esteemed Hal Samples Space Gallery in Deep Ellum, Jeff's artistic journey has been a testament to his talent and dedication. "CROWNED IN VERSE" marks his triumphant foray into the realm of theology, highlighting his ability to transport readers into richly imagined worlds. Currently based in Dallas, Jeff continues to inspire through his writing, painting, and unwavering pursuit of artistic expression.

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